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THE INDEPENDENT

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M16 in plot to kill Saddam

Exclusive

By Patrick Cockburn

A PLOT by M16, Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, to topple President Saddam Hussein collapsed in ignominy, triggering one of the worst defeats in its history.

The coup, organised by intelligence officers in Amman, Jordan, was crushed by the Iraqi leader, who executed as many as 80 conspirators and arrested hundreds more.

The revelation will be widely seen as contradicting British and American claims that they are not planning to topple the leadership in Baghdad. They have claimed repeatedly that the only issue at stake is the entry of UN weapons inspectors. Yet 18 months ago M16 and

the CIA joined in trying to foment a military coup against President Saddam in Iraq.

Members of the Iraqi opposition say that the organisation chosen by M16 and the CIA to organise the revolt in the Iraqi army is notorious for being riddled with informers.

CIA agents, angry that the White House stopped them from backing an attempt to assassinate President Saddam or mount a military attack on him, have confirmed for the first time to the *Los Angeles Times* that the attempted coup was a joint operation by M16 and the CIA.

The two intelligence agencies chose a group called the Iraqi National Accord, recruited from Iraqi army, party and intelligence officers, as the instrument through which to organise a military coup in Baghdad.

It is led by Dr Iyad Mohammed Alawi, a former member of Iraq's ruling Baath party, who has lived in London since 1971.

Other sources say that the London station of the CIA along with M16 played a key role in choosing the Accord to overthrow the Iraqi government. With money from the intelligence agencies it moved its headquarters to Jordan in early

1996 and tried to recruit serving Iraqi officers to act against President Saddam.

Other experienced opponents of the government in Baghdad say the conspiracy never stood a chance of success. One, who did not want his name published, said: "A coup like this cannot be stage-managed from the outside, as in the 1960s. Saddam has thirty years' experience

in keeping power." He added that the Iraqi National Accord has a bad reputation for containing many Iraqi double agents. The military conspiracy in Baghdad was crushed before it got off the ground. Dr Alawi had publicised his intention to start a mutiny in the Iraqi army. Starting in late June and early July 1996, there was a wave of arrests and executions of senior officers in an elite formation.

The number of those killed is not known but may be as high as eighty.

The CIA's attempt to overthrow President Saddam has received some publicity in the US, but the role of M16 in the failed coup has hitherto been kept secret. Few other operations by British intelligence have produced such immediately fatal results for its participants since M16 arranged in the late 1940s for Albanian anti-Communists to be sent back to their homeland under the supervision of Kim Philby.

M16 appears to have played a lesser role in an earlier attempt by the CIA to destabilise the government of President Saddam through building up opposition in Iraq's three Kurdish provinces from which the Iraqi army had withdrawn. Here,

a local team of CIA agents was prepared to carry out a much more aggressive campaign against the Iraqi leader than Washington was prepared to authorise.

So out of control did the CIA operation in Kurdistan become that the White House only learned what was happening because American code-breakers had intercepted the communications of the Iranian intelligence. From this they learned of their own men's involvement in an assassination plot against the Iraqi leader. They were immediately ordered by Washington not to give support to the conspiracy.

So frustrated did the acting head of the CIA become with some of his officers that he had them investigated by the FBI for trying to murder President Saddam.

UN Secretary-General may go on peace mission to Baghdad

SIGNS grew yesterday that the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, might make a personal eleventh-hour mission to Baghdad to try to avert a military strike against Iraq in the long-running dispute over UN arms inspections.

Mr Annan and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council were to meet in New York to seek agreement on proposals that he could take

there to defuse the showdown. Mr Annan is likely to meet the Iraqi Foreign Minister, Mohammed Said al-Sahhaf, in Paris tomorrow.

Diplomats said the United States and Britain were prepared to support a mission by Mr Annan, provided that he was given clear "bottom-line conditions" by the Security Council.

The computer that can hack into your emotions

By Nicholas Schoon
in Philadelphia

FRUSTRATED? Angry? No one understands you? Never mind, get a computer. Computers are being taught to sense different human emotions.

The work is being done by Dr Rosalind Picard, who runs the world's first research group devoted to enabling computers to detect and respond to human emotions. She and her students have already built a variety of inconspicuous devices for people to wear which collect data on pulse and breathing rate, blood pressure and overall states of arousal - all important cues to our emotional state.

Dr Picard's team, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab, has, for instance, built "confusion-sensing glasses". They have detectors which can pick up electrical activity in the eyebrow muscles resulting from the slightest eyebrow-wrinkling, caused when we furrow our brows.

Dr Picard told the American Association for the Advancement of Science's annual meeting that emotions were fundamental to communication between people and to the way

we reason and take decisions.

Psychologists have shown that patients lacking emotions are unable to make rational decisions; if we don't feel sadness or frustration how are we to learn from our mistakes?

To have really effective communication between people and machines they will have to be programmed to first detect clues to our emotions, use the data to compute what state we are in and finally devise the correct response, Dr Picard said.

Within a couple of decades we are likely to be holding conversations with them, and the play of emotions - even if it is only subtle - is essential to good conversation. "We're talk-

ing about machines that really can adapt to you, just like a person adapts to you," she said.

The cues could be changes in voice, or expression. Already a computer has been programmed to recognise half a dozen extreme emotions, based on facial movements.

Dr Picard's group has been concentrating on physiological data, including how well the skin conducts electricity, which is what lie detectors measure. There is also the prospect of computers being able to pick up cues to our emotions when we touch them. Many of us, perhaps appropriately now spend much more time touching computers at work than we do touching people.



Lovely-dovey: Ian Holm, voted best actor at the Laurence Olivier Awards, kissing Zoe Wannamaker at the ceremony in London yesterday. Holm won for his performance in *King Lear*, soon to be repeated for television, and Wannamaker for *Electra*. Full story, page 3. Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Inquiry into mobile phone health risk

By Charles Arthur,
Science Editor

A GROUP of 18 volunteers will start tests soon to see whether using mobile phones can affect short-term memory, decision-making and reaction time.

The trials at the Bristol Royal Infirmary are part of a £100,000 investigation by the Department of Health to try to establish whether the microwave radiation emitted by hand-held phones could cause cancers or other illnesses.

The study also involves tests on rats at the Chemical and Biological Research Centre at Porton. Down to examine whether mobile phone radiation causes "learning deficits". Dr John Tattersall, who is leading the research, will also carry out parallel research to evaluate the public's attitude to the risk posed by mobile phones.

The first fears over mobile phone technology were triggered by a 1993 US lawsuit on behalf of a woman who claimed

to have developed a tumour behind her left ear after using a mobile phone. Since then, a number of similar multi-million dollar lawsuits have been filed in the US; none has succeeded.

Between 1979 and 1991, the latest year for which full figures are available, the incidence of malignant primary brain tumours increased by 20 per cent in men and women in England and Wales - from about 5 to 6.2 per 100,000. But David Secher of the Cancer Research Campaign said: "The majority of that rise is among the over-70s, who we might assume are not mobile phone users."

Alan Preece, the medical physicist who will be overseeing the tests at Bristol, said yesterday: "I would be quite surprised if there was any effect on the brain from using a mobile phone. I wouldn't expect the small amount of energy that gets absorbed by the brain to do anything but heat it up slightly, and that would be dissipated just like any other warming."

Ministers poised to expel Sinn Fein from peace talks

By David McKittrick in Belfast
and Alan Murdoch in Dublin

THE British and Irish governments are poised to suspend Sinn Fein from the multi-party talks because of the IRA's assumed involvement in two Belfast killings.

The issue dominated yesterday's talks, the first session in Dublin rather than Belfast, but the matter was unresolved last night. The Northern Ireland Secretary, Mo Mowlam, formally moved what is described as an indictment of Sinn Fein, citing the charge that it breached the Mitchell principles of non-violence.

This brought the scheduled business of the talks, consideration of new north-south links, to a halt. But after hours of argument the chairman, former US senator George Mitchell, had not uncovered enough common ground on how to deal with the charge.

Ulster's toll of violence

LOYALISTS were responsible for killing 13 people, and Republicans two people, between 20 July and 25 January, the Government said last night. The figures do not include the two murders in Belfast last week which police have

linked to the IRA. The figures say loyalists were also responsible for 51 shootings, six bombings and 36 assaults; Republicans were said to be behind 20 bombings, 21 shootings, and 26 assaults.

The talks are scheduled to reconvene this afternoon.

Last night the most likely outcome appeared to be exclusion of Sinn Fein until around 10 March, in line with the precedent of the Ulster Democratic Party, suspended after its parent organisation, the paramilitary Ulster Defence Association, admitted three killings.

Such a timetable would avoid complications arising from a possible visit to the US of the Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams, for St Patrick's Day celebrations on 17 March. He and other Sinn Fein lead-

ers yesterday mounted a rear-guard battle which helped delay resolution of the issue. The Republicans say their position is different to that of the UDP in that the IRA admitted killings, while the IRA has declared its true intent.

Sinn Fein says expulsion would be against natural justice, and that even temporary exclusion would endanger the peace process. Later Mr Adams said: "I am absolutely pissed off with trying to make this thing work and those who have no interest in making it work seize upon two men being killed to exploit it and bring

this process down." As the talks were going on, four men were charged in Belfast in connection with the murder of Robert Dougan, one of the killings in contention.

It is understood Ms Mowlam advanced no fresh evidence against Sinn Fein, relying on last week's statement by the RUC Chief Constable, Ronnie Flanagan, that he believed the IRA was involved. Last night the Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, said he had received a personal assurance from Tony Blair that there was evidence of IRA involvement in the killings. He said he trusted Mr Blair's words.

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Catholic anger at Murdoch's papal knighthood

By Steve Boggan

The Roman Catholic church is receiving complaints from worshippers following news that Rupert Murdoch has been awarded a papal knighthood from Pope John Paul II.

Senior Catholics are said to have been "mystified and astonished" when they heard that the purveyor of newspaper sex, scandal and nudity was made a Knight Commander of St Gregory at a ceremony in Los Angeles last month.

News of the award was kept out of Mr

Murdoch's British titles - the *Sun*, the *Times*, the *Sunday Times* and the *News of the World* - at his request, although it is provoking outrage in the religious media and in Ireland, where many Catholics have reacted with anger that Mr Murdoch, who is not a Catholic, appears to have been honoured purely for donating large sums of money to the church. He and his wife, Anna, who is a Catholic, are known in Los Angeles as large contributors to the Archdiocesan Education Foundation, although specific amounts are not known.

The award was made by the Pope at the

suggestion of Cardinal Archbishop Roger Mahony of Los Angeles. His recommendation was vetoed by the Secretariat of State at the Vatican before being given the approval of the pontiff.

The knighthood is bestowed upon people of "unblemished character". It was presented by the Cardinal at St Francis De Sales Church in Los Angeles on 11 January. Other recipients included Bob Hope and Roy Disney, of the Walt Disney empire.

The reaction of Catholics in Britain has been almost unanimously negative.

Deborah Jones, editor of the *Catholic*

Herald, said: "We have been receiving a much larger mailbag than usual, about 99 per cent of it asking: 'What the hell is the church doing giving him a knighthood?'"

"The great majority are complaining about page 3 girls and soft pornography in his newspapers and on his satellite channels. Some of the more thoughtful ones are expressing concern over his monopolistic tendencies and his [legal] reluctance to pay taxes. Worst of all, it does the church no good at all because it gives the impression that these honours can be bought."

Joanna Bogle, of the Association of

Catholic Women, described the decision to honour Mr Murdoch as "absurd".

Speaking in a personal capacity, she said: "It sends out the message that you can make a living out of something - soft pornography - that is regarded by the Church as sinful, and yet you can be awarded for it. The Knighthood of St Gregory is supposed to be about honour and chivalry and splendour. To give it to Murdoch is ridiculous and wrong."

Fr Kieran Conry, director of the Catholic Media Office, confirmed that some Catholics had been complaining.

"Some have said that this man is a purveyor of pornography and filth. The *News of the World* may not be everyone's idea of a good read, but in general, no one could say Mr Murdoch has done anything evil."

Ann Widdecombe, the Tory MP who converted to the Catholic church, said she was "astonished" at the award. But she added: "I hope that now ... he might feel obliged to make some of his newspapers conform to Catholic teachings. It is never too late for a sinner to repent."

News International said Mr Murdoch did not wish to comment.



They took the drink away from Fitz, the fags away from Patsy and stopped the men behaving badly. So whatever will the Americans do to Basil and Sybil?



Lost in translation: Not so *Absolutely Fabulous* (top) in the US without the drugs and drink, and *Cracker* (above) loses its hard edge when it becomes *Fitz*

By Paul McCann
Media Correspondent

BASIL would be livid. Fresh from taking the bad behaviour from *Men Behaving Badly*, excising the drinking, smoking, drugs and jokes from *Absolutely Fabulous*, American television has its heart set on ruining another British comedy classic.

Because CBS is planning a remake of *Fawlty Towers*.

The Seventies series is set to star American sitcom actor John Larroquette, who is best known in Britain for his part as a grasping lawyer in the Eighties comedy *Night Court*.

The pilot is yet to be made, but the omens are not good. Without the demented windmill that was Cleese's Basil Fawlty, without Prunella Scales's Sybil - "A laugh like someone machine-gunning a seal," according to Manuel, the show looks likely to be less funny than a wet weekend in Torquay.

Despite once declaring that the show was so perfectly formed he would only make the 12 existing episodes, the format has been sold by John Cleese and his former wife Connie Booth, who wrote the series with him.

The new version will be made by USA Networks Studios and written by two writers who, rather worryingly, created a comedy called *Something So Right*. This was a comedy of manners about a couple with a number of previous marriages behind them.

Fawlty Towers has long been a bit on American television thanks to eternal repeats on Public Service Television and the cable channel Comedy Central. Twenty years after it was made it remains the BBC's best-selling comedy for overseas sales and every year appears in its top-ten best-selling programmes list.

It is not the first time the Americans have made an attempt on this piece of comedy history. In 1983 a short-lived series called *Amanda's*, which rather missed the point of the *Watery Fowls* title jokes, tried reversing the gender of the bad tempered hotelier.

The history of more recent comedy format acquisitions is not much better. Roseanne Barr bought the rights to *Absolutely Fabulous*, but was told it could never be allowed on air in America with so much drinking and smoking. The re-made clean version was called *High Society* and managed a meagre 13 episodes - which is about half a se-

ries in America - before being canned. The watered-down American version of *Men Behaving Badly* managed one and half series before being cancelled.

Not only comedies suffer when they cross the Atlantic. The lead in *Fitz*, the US version of *Cracker*, goes easy on the alcohol and gambling, and is never seen drawing on a cigarette, unlike the *Fitz* played by Robbie Coltrane.

"They like to buy our series ideas because it gives them an already-made product to put in front of a network, a star or a team of writers," says Colin Jarvis, head of format licensing at BBC Worldwide. "It gives producers a kind of short cut through the system."

Mr Jarvis denies that watering down British jokes is causing American producers problems. "Perhaps that was the case when *Men Behaving Badly* was put on too early for the subject matter," he says. "But *One Foot in the Grave* with Bill Cosby is doing well. And in the past *All in the Family* and *Sandford and Son*, which came from *Till Death do Part* and *Sleeping and Son*, did very well. I think it's just that it's a tougher market now and shows don't get long to prove they work."



Very British humour: If the Americans took the bad behaviour out of *Men Behaving Badly* (above), what will they do to *Fawlty Towers*?

Doctors who make cutting remarks called to account

By Jeremy Laurence
Health Editor

Doctors who make insulting remarks about patients on the operating table risk being found out when the general anaesthetic fails to work, researchers report today.

Patients who heard themselves described as fat, ugly or overweight later complained when they recovered from the anaesthetic that had rendered them immobile and incapable of speech but not asleep.

A study of 45 patients who reported being conscious while undergoing major surgery found half said they were struck by the personal nature of re-

marks made about their bodies, the disease, or the surgery itself.

Half the patients said they were able to see what was going on with some able to recognise things or faces.

Two thirds recalled conversations and the same proportion felt being touched. But although most tried to alert someone, all found themselves to be paralysed and none succeeded.

The study, reported in the *British Journal of Anaesthesia*, is the latest to describe the rare event of awareness under a general anaesthetic. About one in 500 patients regains some level of consciousness during an operation but in almost every

case they remain paralysed, unable to give any sign they are aware of what is going on.

Professor Dierk Schwender and colleagues of the Institute for Anaesthesiology, Munich, Germany, who found the patients by advertising for them, said that the feeling of helplessness was the most traumatic part of the experience for all of the patients.

"The feeling that they were unable to influence the situation was more important than the pain some of them said they suffered," Professor Schwender said.

Although the cases are extremely rare, awareness under anaesthesia is commonest dur-

ing caesarians, when doctors try to limit the amount of anaesthetic used to minimise the risk of harm to the baby, and during heart operations, when poor circulation means the anaesthetic may not reach the brain in sufficient quantities.

"We always prepare patients undergoing these operations and reassure them that we will talk to them all the time and watch out for any sign that they may be conscious. If you do that they are quite happy to accept it," Professor Schwender said. "One should treat patients always as patients, even when they are unconscious. It is when doctors fail to do that that problems occur."

Crowning glory for 'Lear' at Olivier theatre awards

By David Lister
Arts News Editor

IAN HOLM and Richard Eyre celebrated a double triumph for the National Theatre's production of *King Lear* when they both received Laurence Olivier Awards yesterday.

The best actor award went to Ian Holm for his towering performance, soon to be repeated on television. And Richard Eyre was named best director.

The two stars of the musical *Chicago*, Ute Lemper and Ruthie Henshall, were pitted against each other for the best actress in a musical award. Lemper won and in customary awards ceremony style immediately paid a tearful tribute to her co-star.

Zoe Wamaker was named best actress for her role in *Electra*, while Patrick Marber's comedy of contemporary sexual mores, *Closer*, won best play, beating two men he acknowledged as lifelong influences, Tom Stoppard and David Hare.

Ian Holm is one of many star names supporting the *Independent* and *Namendepend* on *Sunday's* Save The Arts Campaign. And, not surprisingly, at a time of continuing financial crisis in the arts, the awards ceremony at the Albery Theatre in London had a political flavour. Compere Clive Ander-

son, took a swipe at the Government for its arts funding record. He said it had been an eventful year for the arts with the opening of London's Globe Theatre showing audiences what it would have been like to visit a theatre in Shakespeare's day. And he added: "The new Labour Government showed us what arts funding must have been like in the Middle Ages."

When the Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, took the stage, he countered: "Can I just say that the Middle Ages didn't last forever." He was not allowed the last word, though. Clive Anderson retorted: "We should be all right in three or four hundred years, then."

There was a significant remark from Mr Smith after Paul Daniel, music director at English National Opera, had won an award. Mr Smith, who a few months ago had caused alarm by indicating the ENO might have to move in to the Royal Opera House, said simply as he came on to the stage: "Long live the English National Opera," causing those present to believe that threat must have been rescinded.

Mr Smith also made a plea to retain one of Britain's most famous theatres, the Old Vic, as he paid tribute to the men who had kept it alive. He was presenting a special award to father and son Ed and David



Ute Lemper: Best actress in a musical

Mirvish, Canadian owners of the Old Vic, to mark their work in restoring and running the 180-year-old building.

The theatre closed its doors in December and is now up for sale. Mr Smith said: "Please don't rush into a disposal of the Old Vic and give all the rest of us a chance to come forward with good high-quality proposals for it to run as a theatre, with a vital role to play in London's life."

Other awards included: Best actor in a musical - Philip Quast in *The Fire*; Best new musical - *Beauty and the Beast*; Best theatre choreographer - Simon McBurney in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*; Best set designer - Tim Goodchild for *Three Hours After Marriage*; Best performance in a supporting role - Sarah Woodward in *Tom & Jerry*; Best supporting performance in a musical - James Dreyfus in *Lady in the Dark*; Best new dance production - *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso Ed Il Moderato* by Mark Morris Dance

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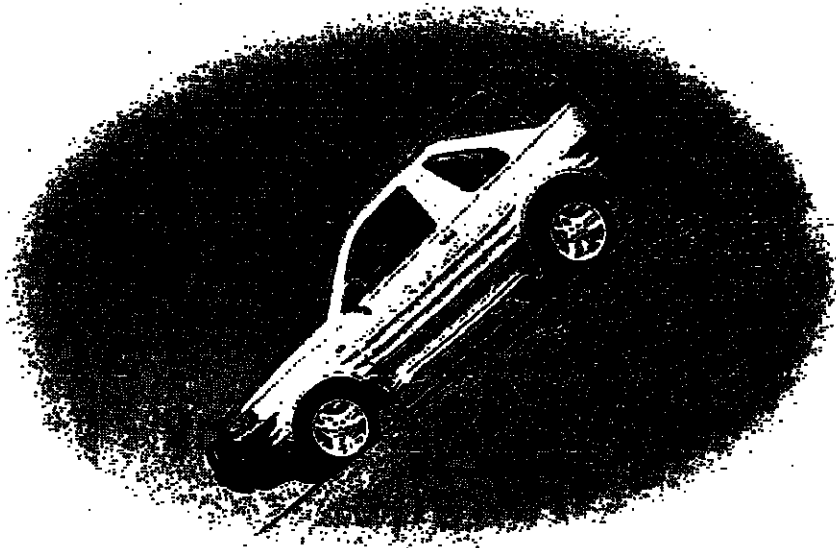
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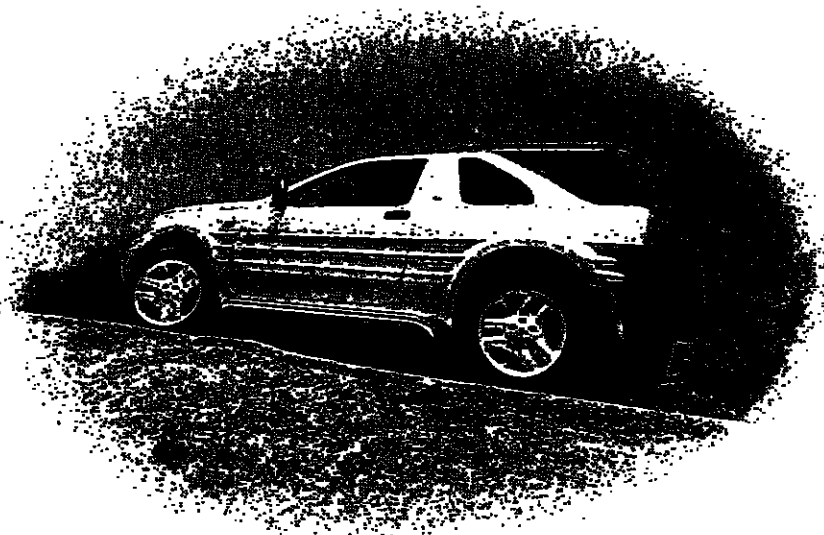
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Martha Gellhorn, legend of war reporting, dies



She was one of the most distinguished voices of a bloody and turbulent century, writes Rupert Cornwell



Martha Gellhorn with Ernest Hemingway, whom she met in 1936, and at her home (above left)

Photographs: Robert Capa, Ian Berry/Magnum

PRIVILEGE TO BE A FRIEND

One of the greatest privileges of my life was to have been Martha Gellhorn's friend.

Her accomplishments as a journalist have been well documented and rightly celebrated — Martha hungered after the truth and loathed social injustice. But as a friend she was without parallel, a pillar of support and a model of courage.

If you felt your life was falling apart, Martha could always be counted upon for inspiration. When my marriage was failing she sent me a typically stern, two-line note. A woman alone has nothing to be ashamed of, she said, and to be a woman alone is far, far better than to be a woman trapped in a loveless marriage.

Martha herself had experienced two failed marriages, the first, of course, to Ernest Hemingway. She adored the company of clever young men and despised those she considered simpering fools. (Martha suffered fools very, very badly.) To be in her company was to be elevated into a special, rarefied world, one where love and loyalty were all.

I loved her like a mother and respected her like no other. I will miss her more than any words can say.

— Rosie Boycott

Martha Gellhorn, who died in London at the weekend, aged 89, was not so much a woman war reporter as one of the very greatest correspondents to cover the conflicts of this bloodiest and most violent of centuries.

This American who made London her final home practised journalism for the best part of 60 years, from the end of the 1920s to what she would call her "last piece of war reporting", from South Wales, on the doomed British miners' strike of 1984 and 1985. In between, she covered wars from Spain to Finland, China and Java, and Europe and — much later — the Arab-

Israeli Six Day War and Vietnam. Somehow too, she found time to produce a dozen novels and collections of short stories, as well as four volumes of memoirs.

Yes, a part of her fame was owed to marriage (her second) with Ernest Hemingway, whom she had met in Key West in 1936. But only a small part. Gellhorn followed him to Madrid, and from there covered the Spanish Civil War for *Colliers Weekly*. War's long separations and Hemingway's own idiosyncrasies broke the relationship, and they divorced in 1946. But however impossible his ways, the writer helped Gell-

horn learn her craft and distil her passion.

She once declared she could not abide "all that objectivity shit". The reporter's duty, she believed, was to "limit yourself to what you see or hear, and not suppress or invent". Which is of course in a sense subjectiveness — but also as good a definition of journalistic objectivity, under real or extreme emotional fire, as can be found.

Gellhorn was among those who first conveyed the atrocities of Nazism to the world. "Behind the barbed wire and the electric fence," she wrote of just-liberated Dachau, "the skeletons sat in the sun

and searched themselves for lice. They have no age and no faces... they watched us but they did not move. No expression shows on a face that is only yellowish, stubbly skin stretched across bone."

Those who have witnessed such depravity can never thereafter be blind to the injustices of life. Gellhorn was a radical, who instinctively took the side of the disadvantaged and unprotected — a special *bête noire* in later life was Margaret Thatcher and her "evil revolution" that stoked hatred of the working class. A lifetime of observation had taught her that

the disadvantaged and unprotected are usually the first victims of war. Martha Gellhorn told it like it was.

To later generations of women war reporters, she was inspiration and a role model. Among her female contemporaries only Clare Hollingworth, who from the Polish-German border in 1939 scooped the Foreign Office on the outbreak of the Second World War, came close. Oriana Fallaci, the BBC's Kate Adie, Carole Walker and Sue Lloyd Roberts, and now Christiane Amanpour of CNN, are among her professional descendants.

By the end, her sight had almost gone and her physical powers were ebbing. But visitors to her top-floor flat in Cadogan Square, with its views over the rooftops of the great museums of Kensington, found her mental sharpness and commitment as fierce as ever. And in the months before she died, she drew renewed enthusiasm from the election of a Labour Government pledged to an "ethical foreign policy". In a sense, that had been Gellhorn's objective, from behind a typewriter, every day of her professional life.

Obituary, page 18; Comment, page 17.

Doctors to join with police to help crack paedophile rings

By Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

SPECIALIST TEAMS of police and social workers could be set up to crack paedophile rings — a plan contained in a government consultation paper to be published today which will spark a fresh national debate about how child abuse should be tackled.

The Green Paper, to be unveiled by health minister Paul Boateng, will say that child prostitution should be targeted by social services and police, and it will raise the possibility of a national register for people suspected but not convicted of child abuse

offences. Family doctors will also be given fresh guidance to override their professional codes of patient confidentiality in order to alert social workers and the police where they are presented with evidence of child abuse.

Child deaths could also be looked at more closely as part of the review of child abuse in what amounts to the most comprehensive consultation exercise for years mounted by the Government to prevent harm to children.

The Green Paper does not rule out legislation, but seeks to reinforce the action already being taken by agencies to

tackle child abuse by improving co-ordination, the exchange of information, and issuing tougher guidelines to professionals in the front line. It says that investigating paedophile networks is complex, and time-consuming, and the time may have come to establish specialist teams of police and social workers to investigate abuse.

It points out that since the last major overhaul of the guidance in 1991, information about the nature of child abuse has increased substantially.

There were 967 cases over the past four years — an average of 242 cases a year — falling into three main categories: rit-

ual abuse, paedophile networks and family abuse. Investigations looked into claims of occult abuse of children, but found little evidence for its existence.

The Green Paper says the Government recognises that organised abuse of children does occur sometimes within institutions such as residential homes or schools, involving child pornography and it has a "damaging and traumatic" effect on the victims.

It says that effective and clear procedures are needed for tackling organised child abuse and asks: "Is there a need for specialist teams?"

On family doctors, it says that guidance issued since the

Department of Health document *Working Together* in 1991 made clear that child abuse was one of the exceptional circumstances in which disclosure of information to agencies, such as social services, could be justified in order to safeguard the interests of the child. Greater emphasis is now being placed on that guidance.

Doctors have become increasingly uneasy about the expansion of their "policing" role. A BMA source said: "GPs are facing policing tasks being imposed on them. It is happening in a number of areas, from drinkers to drivers and now child abuse. They think it's unfair."

It raises difficult issues for health professionals in breaking a confidence about families for whom they have to provide health care. However, it is unlikely that GPs will wish to be seen refusing to help the community in which they live to stop child abuse. The need for better co-ordination between agencies has been underlined repeatedly in reports on successive child abuse scandals.

The professor at the centre of a controversial project involving the clandestine filming of child abuse by parents in hospital said in October that more help was needed from family doctors in alerting the authorities to abuse.

Boy hurt in sunroof horror

A TRIP for a Valentine's day gift almost ended in tragedy when a three-year-old boy was nearly choked to death by a car sunroof. The toddler's father left the boy and an 18-month-old baby strapped in the back of the car while he went into a florist's on Friday.

But when he returned to his car, at Chester-le-Street, Co Durham, he found his son trapped in the roof. The boy twice accidentally tripped the sunroof control switch — locking it against his neck and almost killing him.

But his father, who is trained in first aid, released his son, gave him the kiss of life and heart massage and eventually brought him round. He was described as being in a "comfortable" condition yesterday at Durham's Dryburn Hospital.

Call to scrap fraud juries

JURIES could be scrapped for complex fraud trials, under government proposals announced yesterday. The move follows a series of high-profile cases, such as the Blue Arrow trial, that have collapsed at huge expense. But John Wadham, director of civil liberties group Liberty, said: "The right to trial by jury is a fundamental part of our constitution and is the only democratic element in a criminal justice system."

Welsh Assembly site

THE battle to provide a home for the planned Welsh Assembly is now a two-horse race between Cardiff and Swansea, the Government said yesterday. The Welsh Secretary, Ron Davies, said he had received 14 proposals from developers and 10 from local authorities, but confirmed that the two cities had emerged as the only realistic sites for the building.

Supermarket 'embargo'

The Irish government accused British supermarkets yesterday of operating an embargo on Irish beef sales in the UK worth £200m a year. The Republic's agriculture minister, Joe Walsh, made a formal protest in Brussels about British beef marketing tactics which he said were in breach of the EU treaty.

Dome organisers send their First XI out to bat

Organisers of the Millennium Dome yesterday unveiled the line-up of celebrities and experts who will advise them on what should go inside the controversial exhibition. Members of the committee, dubbed the "Litmus Group", range from the children's entertainer Floella Benjamin and film producer Lord Puttnam to experts from the arts, sciences and broadcasting.

The team, known as the Creative Review Group, will be responsible for advising organisers on the "coherence, quality, entertainment and educational potential" of plans for the structure. New Millennium Experience Company chief executive Jennie Page said: "We are delighted that ...



Sounding the millennium with good advice: Michael Grade (left), Lord Rogers, Floella Benjamin and Lord Puttnam

we can call on the best in the business in terms of making sure our creative ideas have genuine popular appeal at the same

time as intellectual bite." The group, whose members are unpaid, has so far met three times, and is expected to meet on a monthly basis until the Dome opens in 2000.

The team includes:
■ Floella Benjamin - children's TV presenter and actress.
■ Sir Neil Cossons - director of the Science Museum.
■ Professor Christopher Fraying - rector, Royal College of Art.
■ Simon Jenkins - millennium commissioner and newspaper columnist.
■ Michael Jolly - chairman and chief executive of The Tus-

sands Group.
■ Lord Puttnam - chairman of Enigma Productions.
■ John Sorrell - chairman, the Design Council.
■ Lord Rogers - Dome architect.
■ Mike Davies - Millennium project director at the Richard Rogers Partnership.
■ Michael Grade - former head of Channel Four, chairman of First Leisure Corporation.
■ Ruth Mackenzie - general director of Scottish Opera.
Mr Grade and Ms Mackenzie are also members of the NMEC board. Ms Page said the group was an informal

arrangement and more members were likely to be added. She said the team would be reviewing plans for all areas of the exhibition. Other experts are also being called in as "witnesses" to advise on specific attractions or services. Among these will be the panel of children to give a young person's view. The BBC's Director of Television, Alan Yentob, is also being brought in to advise on the broadcasting potential of the opening night of the Dome and the year-long exhibition. Plans so far are for the BBC to broadcast the opening on 31 December 1999. The BBC is

also working with the NMEC to create the Millennium Memory Bank of oral histories which will form one feature of the exhibition.

Fears that BT was about to withdraw £12m sponsorship were dismissed yesterday by Peter Mandelson, Minister without Portfolio, who told the Commons prospects for private sector investment in the £750m project remained strong. He said he had spoken to Sir Peter Bonfield, chief executive of BT, who had said: "No, we are certainly not going to pull out." The reason why the company was not going to pull out, Mr Mandelson said, was because BT was not "a company of the old school, of the old Britain, unconfident and unambitious", but rather a "company of the future - confident and vibrant - like the new Britain".

The question session produced so much criticism that Barry Sheerman, a Labour supporter of the scheme, later protested to the Speaker about the lack of balance in the questions asked. Among critics, Dennis Skinner asked whether "Heseltine's Folly" had passed the point of no return at which the money could be spent instead on a millennium hospital.

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THE BEST AND
THE WORST

THE worst beaches were:

Porthpean near St Austell in Cornwall (52 items of rubbish per metre); **Hoylake, Beach Road**, on the top of the Wirral (27 per metre); **Oxwich Bay** in Swansea (23.64 items per metre); **Jennycliff**, near Plymouth, Devon (21.5 per metre); **Stone Jetty**, at Morecambe, in Lancashire (21.13 per metre) and **East Sands**, North Queensferry in Fife (20.2 per metre).

The best beach was at **Sennen Cove**, the nearest beach to Land's End in Cornwall, with 0.04 items of rubbish per metre. The second best beach was found at **Sandways**, Kingsand (0.08 per metre), which is on the other side of Plymouth from Jennycliff – the fourth worst beach.

Third best was **Wadhams**, north of Great Yarmouth, Norfolk (0.08 items per metre), with **Rhyl East** in North Wales taking fourth place (0.10 per metre).

Portmuck Harbour, at Larne, Co Antrim in Northern Ireland was the fifth cleanest beach in the survey, with 0.10 pieces of rubbish per metre.



Clean sweep: Children playing on the beach at Sennen Cove in Cornwall, which was found to be the cleanest beach in Britain

Photograph: David Swanborough

British pubs
'turning into
Disneyesque
travesties'

TOO many pub-goers are being subjected to "Disneyesque travesties" of Irish and Victorian inns, according to judges of a scheme to find Britain's top drinking holes. In a savage attack on design standards, competition judges hit out yesterday at an overabundance of brass and brie-a-brac brought in at the expense of quality and imagination.

They refused to award prizes in two categories of the English Heritage/Campaign for Real Ale Pub Design competition. Conservation and New-Build, saying standards were so low that none of the pubs warranted the accolade. Steven Parissien wrote in the judges' report: "A depressingly large proportion of the entries were bedecked with over-familiar 'heritage' paraphernalia – Disneyesque travesties straight out of the catalogue rather than the back of the attic."

Dismissing them as "grotesque parodies" of pubs from the 1890s, he said most Victorian interiors were as "authentic as Dick Van Dyke's cockney accent".

Much of the £10m spent on revamping pubs in 1997 appeared to have been wasted on "heavy-handed" alterations to keep up with the latest marketing theme rather than celebrating the importance of individual buildings.

It is the first time in the competition's 10 year history that a winner has not been found for the Conservation award, although the New Build prize has been given out only once.

The judges said it was up to pub owners, managers and architects to raise standards, but also called on local authority planners to exercise greater control over renovations. However, it was not all bad news for drinkers. The Bread and Roses, Clapham, south London, run by the Workers Beer Company, won the Best Refurbishment Award for its transformation from a rundown community pub into a hostelry "with attitude" with no sign of "plagiarism, fakes and boring repetition".

The Conversion to Pub Use award went to Frazer's Bar in Edinburgh, housed in the former offices of the Royal Bank of Scotland, described as having an "art deco yet unmistakably contemporary feel".

Judges said there was a trend towards converting banks to pubs or restaurants, as a number of banking chains sold off town-centre premises.

Beaches drowning in sea of rubbish

By Rosa Prince

BRITAIN'S beaches are drowning under a sea of rubbish including condoms, syringes and sanitary products. Volunteers for the annual Beachwatch survey of Britain's beaches, run by *Reader's Digest* and the Marine Conservation Society, found an average of 1,482 pieces of waste per kilometre of beach; a 5 per cent increase on 1996.

At the worst beach, Porthpean in Cornwall, an average of 52 items of rubbish

were found per metre of sand, including 225 sanitary items in a 25-metre area. Most of the rubbish was left behind by beachgoers who now make 10 million day-trips to the coast a year. Other waste came from shipping, fishing and sewage.

The litter had an international aspect with rubbish from 16 countries found on the 210 beaches surveyed, presumably dropped from boats.

Among the debris were an oven cleaner from China, a carton of apple juice from Poland and an energy drink from New

Zealand. There were also fridges, a glass eye and medical waste including a drip feed bag.

Beachwatch '97 was carried out by nearly 2,500 volunteers. Altogether they found 17,053 crisp and sweet packets, 8,064 drink cans and 8,124 cigarette stubs.

Medical and sanitary waste were a prominent feature. They included 215 syringes, 458 condoms and 16,467 cotton bud sticks. Cotton buds, which are too small to be filtered out during sewage treatment, formed the bulk of sanitary waste.

The volunteers also found 538 balloons, 478 shoes and 26 dead animals.

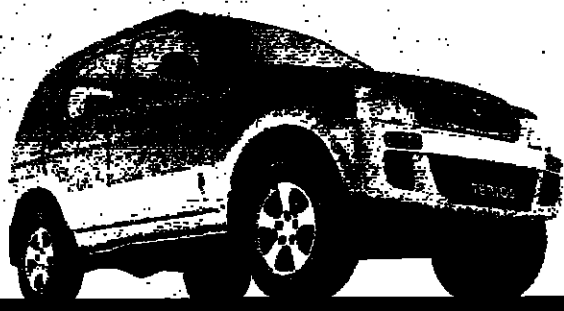
More than 50 per cent of the litter was plastic. Susannah Hickling, *Reader's Digest* environment editor, said: "Plastic is cheap to produce, easy to use and easy to throw away. But what people don't realise is that it ends up bobbing on our seas and washed up on our beaches – an appalling non-biodegradable legacy for future generations."

Samantha Pollard, conservation officer at the Marine Conservation Society, said:

"Ships must stop dumping overboard and individuals must not drop litter, or flush away plastic bathroom waste."

Rubbish, particularly fishing lines and ropes can cause animals and birds to become entangled. Wildlife can also be poisoned or choked by eating litter such as plastic.

Beachwatch '97 revealed that Wales had the dirtiest beaches in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland the best. Scotland and the Channel Islands were slightly better than average.



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Hague's reforms jar with the faithful

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

WILLIAM Hague relaunched his party yesterday, claiming the Tories had modernised more in the past eight months than Labour had done in 18 years. But even as he declared "the most radical reforms since the time of Disraeli", there was new evidence of dissent over the changes. As one observer put it, Mr Hague emerged looking more like Michael Foot than Tony Blair. Constituency associations are strongly opposed to plans for a Conservative Women's Network, according to the results of an internal survey. Nor do they like the idea of a national membership database, or a new area framework with smaller groups of constituencies.

Announcing the changes yesterday, Mr Hague said: "These reforms are not just mine; they belong to the hundreds of thousands of party members from all over the country who have taken part in meetings and ballots and debates on reform since last summer."

In fact, it became clear that the party dropped plans to

ensure that a quarter of interviewees in candidate selections were women after they were opposed by members. Only one-third of members supported them.

Only 15 per cent of associations strongly agreed with a programme of encouragement for women candidates, and 15 per cent strongly supported the idea of a women's network, while more than one-third disagreed with it.

The national membership database had more support, though only four in 10 strongly supported it. A new area framework for the party was supported strongly by one-third of local parties.

Other major reforms announced by Mr Hague included the ending of foreign donations, which have formed a significant part of the Conservatives' funding in the past. He added that he would comply with the recommendations of the Neill Committee which is currently looking at the issue, but donations over £5,000 would also be published.

For the first time, party members will be given a chance to vote on policies for the next gen-



Changing times: William Hague at yesterday's launch of *The Fresh Future* package, which he hopes will breathe new life into the Tory party

eral election in a ballot. They will also vote in a ballot on a single European currency though when this will happen has not been decided. New party leaders will be elected by a ballot of members, though old leaders will still only be unseated by a vote among MPs.

The Young Conservatives, Conservative Students and

Conservative Graduates will all be replaced by a single organisation, Conservative Future. The Conservative Women's Network will aim to ensure that more women are elected to Parliament in future.

There will also be a management board, with one-third of members elected by a national convention of mem-

bers, and a new disciplinary panel to deal with cases of misconduct by MPs.

In a move with strong echoes of new Labour, Mr Hague descended a staircase in London's Atrium restaurant to the strains of "Spirit of the Future" from "Millennium" by Richard Harvey. Delivered in front of a purple backdrop, his

reform document was titled *The Fresh Future*.

Some sections of the party remained unimpressed, though. Aidan Rankin, secretary of the newly-formed Conservative Democratic Movement, said the party was still not listening enough to its members.

"Although the party is imitating the new Labour strate-

gy, in reality it is more like old Labour. There is still a 'them and us' atmosphere. It looks in many ways as if one member, one vote for the leader is an excuse to press conformity on the rest of the party and to centralise power," he said.

The trade minister, Barbara Roche, claimed the Tories were still less democratic.

Ministers toughen rules on job cuts

By Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

MINISTERS yesterday proposed much tougher redundancy laws which lawyers believe will lead management to "think twice" before getting rid of employees.

This summer new legislation is expected to introduce "clear rules" making it more difficult for companies to avoid consulting their workers in cases of "downsizing", or where an undertaking is transferred from one employer to another.

Proposals tabled by Ian McCartney, the trade and industry minister, will also remove the ability of employers to "adjust the number and timing" of redundancies to get round the law. Mr McCartney intends removing a threshold relieving employers of obligations where fewer than 20 job losses are planned within a 90-day period.

The minister will attempt to ensure that unions are part of the consultation process where they are recognised. Where there is no union, more stringent regulations are envisaged aimed at ensuring that employees' representatives are properly elected and independent.

Mr McCartney proposes higher compensation for workers who have not been properly informed of employers' plans. They will receive the equivalent of 90 days' pay (nearly 13 weeks) instead of four weeks in many cases at the moment.

John McMullen, employment law partner at solicitors Pinsent Curtis, a leading firm which specialises in advising employers, said companies would have to bear in mind the cost of trimming the workforce after the new regulations, tabled to ensure Britain complies with European Union law, came into force. "It could make employers think twice about redundancies," he said.

John Monks, TUC general secretary, said the plans would give workers rights denied them by the previous government.

Labour under attack over benefit changes and welfare-to-work plan

By Fran Abrams

MINISTERS were under attack from two sides last night over plans to reform benefits and get the unemployed back to work.

As a group of campaigners for the disabled met Harriet Harman, the Secretary of State for Social Security, a Labour-supporting record company ex-

ecutive attacked the government's Welfare to Work scheme for stifling budding musicians.

Alan McGee, head of Creation records and a member of the Government's Creative Industries Task Force, said the programme was "incredibly naive" and was also unworkable for people hoping to be musicians.

The new system would force

ambitious young musicians to take jobs which would prevent them from pursuing their musical goals, he said.

"You cannot be promoting this 'Cool Britannia' image that the Government's promoting - which is fair enough because it's never been better for 20 or 30 years - and then put the next generation of Noel Gallaghers

and Primal Scream singer Bobby Gillespies into jobs doing plumbing," he said.

The Government could not expect to gather in the accolades being handed out to Britain's revived entertainment industry while wiping out the chances of the next generation of stars. "It's killing off people's spirit and we don't want to be Belgium," he

said. McGee, who signed up Oasis after discovering them in a Glasgow club, gave the Labour Party £50,000 before last year's general election. He was also a guest at a Downing Street reception last year.

Later there was more dissent when the all-party disability group, led by Lord Ashley of Stoke, emerged from a meeting

with Ms Harman to accuse ministers of turning disabled people into militants by reviewing their benefits.

Although the Secretary of State reiterated assurances that no disabled person in genuine need should fear the reassessment of their payments under the Benefits Integrity Programme, the campaigners were

not convinced. However, she refused to suspend the wider-scale review of welfare benefits on which the Government has embarked, or to guarantee there would be no significant cuts to disability benefits.

Lord Ashley said: "It seems... that this government is making militants out of six-and-a-half million moderate disabled people."

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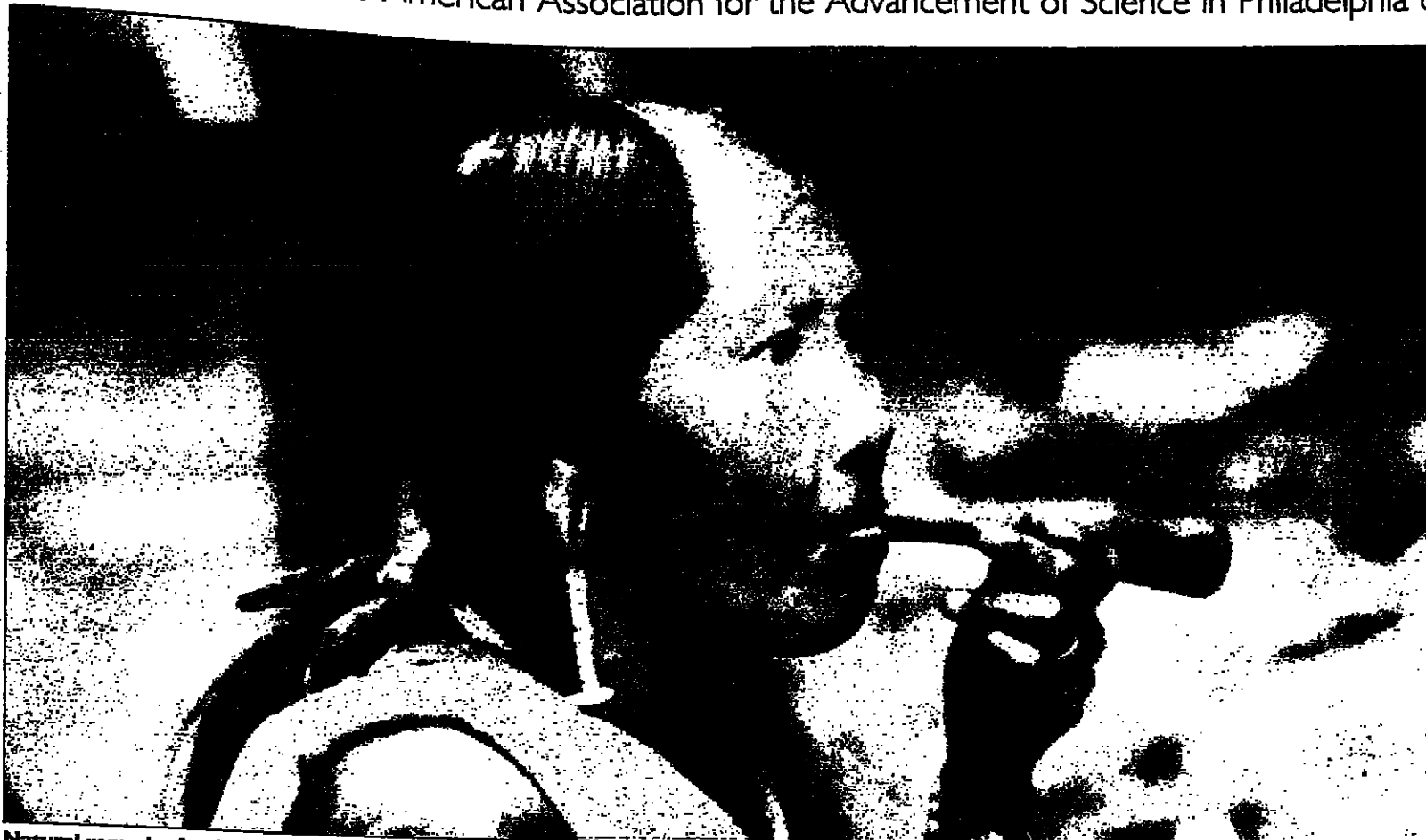
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Nicholas Schoon at the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Philadelphia on how natives use plant life against disease and predators



Natural remedy: A scientist has studied Amazon tribes who extract drugs from a bean which they grind and then snort to flush out worms

Trance encounter for Amazon medicine man

Hallucinogenic drugs from the Amazon rainforest are also a powerful medicine against gut parasites, a leading "ethnobotanist" and biochemist told the meeting. They are prescribed by tribal medicine men for both spiritual and medicinal needs, with no clear dividing line between the two.

Professor Eloy Rodriguez of Cornell University, New York State, studies the ways in which several tribes and animal species in a small part of the Amazon jungle in Venezuela use plants. In a series of field trips, he and his researchers have identified more than 100 species which are used for purposes other than food - deterring parasites and predators, fighting disease and putting people into a trance. The scientists then try to identify the cocktail of chemicals involved.

He has studied two plants which contain potent hallucinogens. One is a Passiflora or passion flower with large, beautiful red and yellow flowers, whose leaves are used to make a drink. The other is a legume called yopo which produces bean pods; native people grind the beans into a fine snuff then snort it.

Dr Rodriguez has tried them. "They have a very strong hallucinogenic effect but they're also very strong purgatives. Jesus! I lost 10lb in weight."

The chemicals involved are beta carbolines. They are able to "knock out" nematode worms which infest native peoples, paralysing them so that the diarrhoea and vomiting also caused by the medicine purge them from the body. The worms depend on serotonin, the "happiness" chemical used to signal

between nerve cells, from their hosts to function normally. The carboline blocks their ability to use serotonin.

Tropical plants and insects contain a vast number of "secondary chemicals" which are used to deter predators. Native people have learnt to use them for making dozens of different poisons and medicines. Mammals scrape their fur with the bark or leaves of certain plants to keep pests off them, and eat others when they are sick.

Dr Rodriguez says he does not collaborate with Western drug firms prospecting for new materials because he believes native people will gain nothing. He says Indians must be encouraged to retain and spread their knowledge of the medicinal powers of local plants in their own countries, growing herb gardens.

Army stockpiles anti-riot chemicals

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

BRITISH army chiefs are stockpiling a chemical 10 times more potent than CS gas to use in riots, *The Independent* has discovered.

The revelation that CR might be used fired from a water cannon to disperse crowds in the UK has disturbed civil rights campaigners.

The chemical is more volatile than CS and it causes sore eyes and breathing difficulties. Although its effects are not thought to be lasting, it causes extreme discomfort.

Officials disclosed that they had CR in their stocks as part of Britain's declaration under the Chemical Weapons Convention, which has not been published despite an earlier pledge to do so.

They would not say, though, how long they had held the chemical, where it was kept or in what circumstances it would be used. Nor would they say whether the government also had stores of water cannon from which to fire it into crowds.

The police have said they do not keep CR, so it seems it would only be used in circumstances where the army was called in to support them against rioters.

CR, the full name of which is Dibenz-1,4-Oxazepine, has not been used in the British Isles before although scientists at the Porton Down defence research centre in Wiltshire are known to have experimented with it about 20 years ago.

Harry Cohen, the Labour MP for Leyton and Wanstead, plans to table a series of parliamentary questions to find out more about the stockpile.

"Why is it that the Ministry of Defence has a greater variety of riot control agents than the civil police? I shall be demanding some answers," he said.

The civil rights group Liberty

is also angered by the disclosure. It already campaigns against CS, saying there has been no consultation or parliamentary scrutiny of its use.

Guidelines laid down by the Association of Chief Police Officers suggest CS should only be used by individual officers under attack, the group says.

John Wadham, Liberty's director, said neither CS nor CR should be used to control crowds. "We see it as part of a move towards policing by coercion rather than by consent," he said.

It does not seem that the stocks are destined for Northern Ireland. The Royal Ulster Constabulary, under whose umbrella the army acts in the province, said yesterday that it preferred plastic bullets.

"They are a much preferred means of riot control in any circumstances. Water cannons and CS gas are indiscriminate while plastic baton rounds can be directed at a particular rioter," a spokesman said.

Officials from the Department of Trade and Industry and Ministry of Defence would not say how much CS was held, where it was held or what plans there were for using it.

Although the Conservatives promised to publish the Government's submission under the Chemical Weapons Convention, which includes riot control agents, it has only released the parts relating to old stocks and ongoing defensive research.

In a separate development, it has also emerged that the Ministry of Defence has let a £100,000 contract to scientists at Porton Down to research alternatives to CS gas.

The sprays are mainly used by police forces to counteract attacks on individual officers.

Figures released by ACPO after a trial period reported a 6.8 per cent drop in assaults against officers armed with the spray, but a 14 per cent drop in assaults against a control group.

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DAILY POEM

The Folklorist (for Kath Grant)

By Ian Duhig

*She ripped the fur up to the rabbit's ears
And the red tore left by her snare,
Saying some resurrection man once fell
Hauling her kin up yon church wall -
He pitched forward while the corpse tumbled back
And the slipknot rode to his neck.
They hung like justice by the yew thicker
And would I like a lucky foot?*

Our poems today and tomorrow come from *Signals*, an anthology of poetry and prose from writers involved in the first Abbey Arts Week, organised by the Abbey Grammar School in Newry. *Signals*, edited by Adrian Rice, costs £8.95 (paperback) from The Abbey Press, Courtenay Hill, Newry, County Down BT34 2ED.

Voting in India's badlands

On the first day of the elections, Peter Popham takes to the road

I SET OFF yesterday morning for the badlands of Uttar Pradesh, with booth-capturing history-sheets on my mind.

Two hundred and twenty two of India's 545 constituencies voted in the general election, including Delhi, and much of the north. In several nearby constituencies, "history-sheets" - people with a long history of being charged with crimes, or "charge-sheeted" as the Hindi term has it - are standing for election.

Elsewhere, confirmed gangsters, kidnappers and murderers operate with the protection of MPs. One way such people influence election results is by "booth-capturing" - staging raids on polling stations, setting them on fire, seizing ballot papers, marking them for their favoured candidate and stuffing the boxes, even (as happened in Bihar state yesterday), strangling the polling officer.

But India has 900,000 polling stations staffed by 4.5 million election officials, so one's chances of stumbling upon something gruesomely irregular are slim. I tried to improve the odds by going first to Ghaziabad, a ramshackle city an hour east of Delhi, where trouble was expected.

At the entrance of a half-built school, police with breech-loading rifles looked on laconically as the citizens filed in. The procedure at an Indian polling station is as follows. You present yourself, preferably but not compulsorily armed with identification, at a table manned by supporters of your favoured party, who check your name on a list, cross it off and give you a slip. At another table, a non-partisan polling official takes the slip, checks your name a second time, hands over a ballot paper and puts a streak of indelible ink across the index finger to deter you from coming back for more.

How voters who are not known supporters of a particular party get past the first table was not apparent, but I was assured that it is possible. At

Ghaziabad no boxes were on fire so I soon drove on. At the next polling station I visited all was not absolutely well.

Noida is another raw town east of Delhi. As in Ghaziabad, politics and crime are closely interfolded here, with organised gangsters protected by political patrons and therefore strongly motivated to see that their patrons win.

Unlike Ghaziabad, security was genuinely tight here, traffic barred from entering the area, the press among the few exempt. Noida supposedly had 111 "supersensitive" polling stations where high security was in force. The one I visited was calm. But when I asked who was winning, the polling officer answered rather too quickly, "The BJP by a mile!" and smirked. If a BJP partisan was in control of the polling station, no amount of police could prevent the election being rigged.

Saturday's series of explosions in the southern city of Coimbatore, in which 48 people died, many at a BJP campaign rally, raised fears that this election might be marred by an upsurge of Hindu versus Muslim communal violence. So far that has yet to happen. In Bihar, where the polling officer was strangled, 12 other people died in polling day violence yesterday. And while there are four more polling days to come before counting begins on 8 March, my third polling station of the day offered some tantalising suggestions.

Chandni Chowk is a constituency in the medieval city of Old Delhi, a predominantly Muslim place and one of only two constituencies in the capital not held by the BJP. But here it became apparent that the conciliatory line adopted during this campaign by the BJP towards Muslims is beginning to bear fruit.

With its roots in militant Hindu nationalism, the BJP has always been anathema to Muslims. But for the first time, judging by the people I spoke to, Muslims are coming over to them in considerable numbers. One elderly Muslim man said without hesitation: "I voted BJP because they are doing a good job, and they are trying hard to please us." India's Muslim minority about 150 million strong. If this trend were to be reflected nationwide, the BJP would romp home.



A wheel from the China Airlines jet lying in front of a burnt-out building as firefighters search for survivors

Photograph: Chen Jai-wen/AP

200 die as Airbus ploughs into homes

By Stephen Vines in Hong Kong

MORE than 200 people are feared dead after a China Airlines Airbus 300 crashed on landing yesterday in Taiwan. The jet came down short of the runway at Chiang Kai-shek International Airport, near the capital Taipei, and ploughed on to the coastal highway, coming to a stop when it hit a number of buildings and exploded into a inferno.

The first victims were four adults and a baby travelling in a car which was hit by the aircraft. It then proceeded to destroy four buildings and hit

dozens of houses. Flight CI676, arriving from the Indonesian island of Bali, was carrying 182 passengers and 14 crew members. Rescuers worked through the night looking for survivors. The first to be found was a four-month-old baby who later died in hospital.

Officials are not holding out much hope of finding other survivors from the crash. Bodies and body parts were strewn over the coastal highway and surrounding rice fields.

Among the passengers were the governor of Taiwan's central bank, Sheu Yuan-

dong, and his wife and the head of the bank's foreign exchange department, Cyril Chen. They had been attending a central bankers' meeting discussing the Asian financial crisis. Taiwan has been playing a leading role assisting fellow Asian countries. Most of the other victims were thought to be tourists.

The cause of the crash is unknown. Last night, a China Airlines spokesman said that the company was awaiting further reports before making any comments. He confirmed that the pilot had told the control tower that visibility was bad

and that he was making a second attempt to land. Visibility had been bad earlier in the day but had improved by nightfall when the plane came down. Contact was lost during the second attempt. The black box, which may shed further light on the accident, has already been recovered.

Like most of China Airlines' pilots both the captain and his deputy were ex-airforce flyers. The captain had been with the airline since 1991. The crashed plane is seven years old. It is part of China Airlines' fleet of 10 Airbus. Exactly the same model was involved in Taiwan's

worst air disaster when a China Airlines Airbus 300 exploded at Japan's Nagoya airport in 1994, killing 263 people.

Rescuers were on the scene within 10 minutes of the crash but had difficulty getting close to the plane and burning buildings. Witnesses said that they heard an enormous explosion, followed by a fire ball as the plane hit the buildings.

China Airlines, the national flag carrier, which was recently privatised but is still indirectly state controlled, has a relatively good safety record.

EU backs IMF deal

EUROPEAN Union governments unanimously backed an IMF threat yesterday to pull out of a \$43bn rescue package for Indonesia if President Suharto presses ahead with a plan to peg the rupiah to the dollar.

Jakarta's move would allow it to go on subsidising imports of rice and fuel and so avert further food riots. But the IMF and most western governments are opposed to IMF stand-by credits being used to back Indonesia's currency reserve. Without backing, a fixed exchange rate between the rupiah and the dollar would be "catastrophic", British officials said.

— Katherine Butler, Brussels

Quebec waits

IN WHAT the chief justice calls Canada's most important legal case ever, Supreme Court must decide whether Quebec has the right to secede unilaterally and declare independence. The court opened hearings yesterday. If it rules that Quebec cannot secede without the rest of Canada's consent, there could be a backlash in the mostly French-speaking province.

— AP, Ottawa

Bomb attack

ZIMBABWE'S only independent member of parliament said yesterday she was attacked by a petrol bomb on Saturday but was not injured. Margaret Dongo said she suspected the bomb, thrown at a home in Chitungwiza, bordering Harare, was aimed at her by supporters of President Robert Mugabe's ruling Zanu-PF party.

— Reuters, Harare

Killing spree

A GUNMAN went on a killing spree and shot dead eight neighbours before being beaten to death by survivors in a village in Lithuania. Police said the man's motive was not known.

— Reuters, Vilnius

Lions eat 7

TWO lions broke into a hut where seven members of an Ethiopian family were sleeping and ate them. The lions were scavenging in the drought-hit south of the country and had been terrorising residents before last week's fatal attack in Bale.

— Reuters, Addis Ababa

Chinese government backs down on expulsion of British aid worker from Tibet

By Teresa Poole in Peking

China has backed down after forcing a British aid worker to leave Tibet. The Save the Children Fund (SCF) education expert has been told she will be allowed to return to Lhasa and the charity hopes she will be back at her job within weeks. It is unusual for China to change

its mind about expelling a foreign resident.

When *The Independent* in December reported the refusal of officials in Tibet to renew the worker's residency papers, the European Union froze its planned 7.6m ecu (£5m) Panam development project for Tibet. The project is supposed to involve non-governmental or-

ganisations such as SCF, but when its education expert was expelled the British charity said it would not be able to consider involvement in Panam.

Sir Leon Brittan, vice-president of the European Commission, was in Peking yesterday for negotiations on China's attempts to join the World Trade Organisation, but his officials

will also be briefed on the SCF saga. The EU is seeking confirmation that the new work permit has been granted and no similar problems will occur. Only then will moves be made to sign the Panam agreement. The EU's first bilateral aid project for Tibet. Few foreigners are based full-time in Tibet and the expulsion of the SCF's

only expatriate staff member based in Lhasa sounded alarm bells among the aid community there. No reason was given after the woman was not allowed back into Tibet after going on holiday in July. It seemed the Chinese had become wary of her simply because she had lived in Lhasa for three years and spoke reasonable Tibetan.

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11/IRAQ CRISIS



Fighting talk: Anti-war protesters climb the fences at the Northwood HQ of Britain's Gulf rapid deployment force in west London

Photograph: Andrew Burman

Annan prepares for last ditch trip to Baghdad

By Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

KOFI ANNAN, Secretary-General of the UN, is to launch a last gasp effort to avoid war in the Gulf with a mission to Baghdad to persuade Saddam Hussein to allow his presidential palaces to be opened to arms inspectors.

Mr Annan was holding consultations with the five permanent members of the Security Council in New York last night but senior sources in London indicated that he could go to Baghdad later this week.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, made it clear Britain was "very supportive" but Downing Street emphasised that if the mission failed, Britain and the US remained ready to take action.

In spite of remarks by US defence chiefs last week that it would take another week to build up the military presence in the Gulf, senior British defence sources continued to raise the military tensions. "We are ready to go now," one said.

Mr Cook will use a debate in the Commons today to set out the reasons why the allies are preparing for military action. Foreign Office sources issued details of intelligence

reports gathered from Hussein Kamel, a defector from Saddam's inner coterie, who disclosed as early as 1995 that the dictator was hiding vast quantities of material involved in the production of weapons of mass destruction.

"UNSCOM has evidence that several organisations including the Special Republican Guard, the Special Security Organisation, and the Intelligence Organisation, have been involved in the mechanism (of concealment)," said a Foreign Office report.

The Government motion supports the efforts to reach a diplomatic solution with Iraq but expresses its full support for the resolve of the Government to "use all necessary means to achieve an outcome consistent with UN resolutions".

Leading Labour dissidents were meeting last night over their tactics for opposing the Government in the debate; around ten are expected to abstain or vote against. The Labour MPs are also planning to lead a vigil in protest at the war outside Downing Street tomorrow.

Meanwhile, a poll today by Talk Radio will show that 80 per cent of people are against war with Iraq.

Iraqi officers pay dear for West's coup fiasco

EIGHTEEN months ago MI6 conducted a joint operation with the CIA to stage a military coup d'état in Baghdad. It was crushed by Saddam Hussein who executed up to 80 Iraqi officers and arrested hundreds of others. It is one of the biggest fiascos in the history of British foreign intelligence since the war.

The coup attempt was organised through Amman, the capital of Jordan, and was to be carried out by the Iraqi National Accord led by Dr Iyad Mohammed Alawi, once a member of the ruling Iraqi Baath Party, who fled to London in 1971.

The aim of the conspirators was to recruit Iraqi army and intelligence officers. But the Iraqi National Accord had a well-earned reputation for being riddled with double agents from Iraqi security. As the coup collapsed an Iraqi intelligence officer, in a final humiliating gesture, telephoned the CIA station chief in Jordan and told him to go home.

The extent of MI6's involvement in the failed conspiracy was revealed by the *Los Angeles Times* at the weekend in an article based on interviews with CIA officers critical of the lack of support from the White House for their efforts to overthrow Saddam Hussein. It confirms that "the CIA program [to stage a coup], operated jointly with MI6, the British intelligence service, was based in Jordan, using a front organisation called the Iraqi National Accord".

Despite its dubious reputation among Iraqis, the Accord was favoured not only by MI6,

Saddam's intelligence service proved more than a match for a CIA and MI6 attempt to unseat him, reports Patrick Cockburn

but by the London station of the CIA, according to former agency officials. London, a centre for Iraqi exiles, was also a fertile recruiting ground for former members of Iraq's military and political elite whom the Accord wanted to attract.

There is an element of farce in the attempts by Western intelligence to overthrow the Iraqi government. At one moment the FBI was called in by the acting head of the CIA to investigate his own agents for attempting to assassinate Saddam Hussein (the assassination of foreign leaders being illegal under United States law). And Washington only knew what its own agents were up to in Iraqi Kurdistan because the NSA, its code-breakers, had intercepted a message from Iranian intelligence officers to Tehran explaining what the CIA was doing.

From the moment President George Bush signed a finding in May 1991 telling the CIA to

overthrow Saddam Hussein, some of the agency's most experienced officers were dubious about their chances. Frank Anderson, the head of the CIA's Near East Division, told ABC television: "We didn't have a single mechanism or combination of mechanisms with which I could create a plan to get rid of Saddam at the time."

At first the CIA operated through an umbrella organisation called the Iraqi National Congress led by Ahmed Chalabi, a former banker, based in Iraq's three Kurdish provinces from which the Iraqi army had withdrawn. He wanted to build up an opposition army which, in alliance with the Kurdish factions, would begin to fight the Iraqi army, recruiting men through desertions and mutiny.

Separately, General Wafiq al-Samarra'i, the former head of Iraqi military intelligence, who joined the opposition in 1994, had a plan to assassinate

Saddam Hussein as he passed over a bridge in his home town of Samarra. Both the military offensive and the assassination bid were supported by the leader of the CIA team in Kurdistan, codenamed "Bob". It is a matter of dispute how much Washington knew.

"Bob" and Mr Chalabi decided the latter should tell Iranian intelligence officials what was going on - it was hoped they would cooperate in an attack on Iraqi government forces in south Iraq. He did so. But when they reported back to their headquarters their message was intercepted by the National Security Agency, the American code-breaking organisation. Informed in this roundabout way about what was happening Tony Lake, the National Security Adviser, sent a message to the CIA team in Kurdistan saying that it did not support the assassination or a military attack on the Iraqi leader.

It is at this point that MI6 and the London station of the CIA developed an alternative strategy by producing the Iraqi National Accord. Brigadier Adnan Nuri, one of its leaders, was already on the CIA payroll. Through him the CIA was authorised by the White House to fund the Accord in a campaign of planting bombs in Iraq. Much is known of this because Abu Amneh al-Khadami, its chief bomb-maker, made a video, seen by *The Independent*, denouncing Brigadier Nuri as an Iraqi agent.

The new American and British strategy was to foment a military coup in Baghdad. General Hussein Kamel, the son-in-law of Saddam Hussein, fled Iraq for Jordan in 1995. The regime in Baghdad looked vulnerable. King Hussein, once close to Iraq, was turning against his old ally. British participation would be important because Dr Alawi and the Accord were based in London and Jordan was one of the handful

of Arab states where Britain still had significant influence.

Disaster followed swiftly. In January 1996 American, British, Jordanian and Saudi intelligence officers met in Saudi Arabia to coordinate plans. Dr Alawi moved to Amman. He also began to give interviews broadcasting his intentions. He emphasised that he wanted a coup not a revolution.

Saddam struck before he did. In late June and early July

news began to filter out of Iraq of the arrests of 160 military officers, including 12 from the elite Republican Guard and three from the Special Republican Guard which protects the Iraqi leader himself.

Going by the execution lists, the conspiracy against Saddam Hussein had some serious recruits. Among those to die were Staff Colonel Khamis Hadi Nimah, commander of the 6th Brigade of the Presi-

dential Guards Division, Brigadier General Ja'afar al-Tayyar, director of training at the Defence Ministry, and many junior and middle-grade officers. A hero of the Iran-Iraq war, General Tali Ruhayyim al-Duri, fled to Turkey.

The failure of the CIA and MI6 against Saddam Hussein in 1996 marked a turning point in his fortunes. In August he dared send his tanks back into Kurdistan. A year later he felt strong enough to challenge the UN weapons inspectors and provoke the present crisis.

MOSSAD BUNGLER KEEPS JOB

A COMMISSION investigating the botched assassination of a Hamas official in Amman last September by Israel's Mossad intelligence service found the operation "fundamentally flawed", but refrained from blaming Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu or recommending him to sack General Danny Yatom, Mossad's boss. Jordan is boycotting all cooperation with Mossad for as long as General Yatom remains at its head. King Hussein is reported to be furious that Israel has not ruled out attacks on Jordanian soil in the future. The Mossad operations chief has already resigned. Inspired leaks from the Prime Minister's office suggest that General Yatom will be allowed to fall on his sword six months after he has completed two years in the post. — Eric Silver in Jerusalem

Saddam said to fear mutiny by army

By Ian Burrell

Senior British military sources suggested yesterday that President Saddam Hussein was deeply worried about the possibility of a revolt in Iraq and that his army was suffering from a crisis in morale.

Drawing on the latest intelligence reports, military chiefs said that President Saddam had despatched units from his elite Republican Guard to cities in the Shia Muslim heartlands of southern Iraq to quell possible outbreaks of unrest.

They said that the officer corps in the Iraqi army was becoming "increasingly politicised" and that the President was relying more heavily than ever on an inner circle of senior officers from his home region of Tikrit.

"Quite clearly Saddam is worried about the security of the regime," said a senior source. "He is worried about uprisings. Morale is bad within his army and some of his closest circle are unhappy."

Latest intelligence estimates on Iraq's military strength show



its fighting capability has diminished considerably since the conflict of 1990-91. The Iraqi army currently consists of some 400,000 troops with 2,200 tanks, approximately half the size of President Saddam's army in the last Gulf war.

Intelligence suggests that President Saddam has 10 long-range Scud-type al-Hussein missiles, which have a range of up to 372 miles. Iraq's anti-aircraft defences have been re-constructed but are regarded as "less comprehensive" than seven years ago. The Iraqi air force is estimated at some 300

combat aircraft, though sources said they were unlikely to be risked against the superior allied airpower but would be protected to maintain Iraq's comparative air strength in the Middle East.

Crucially, military chiefs - who said that British forces in the Gulf were now "ready to go" - do not believe that Iraq would be willing to deploy chemical and biological weapons against the allies.

"That would very clearly show the whole world that they have been making these things and [Saddam] has denied this

Bombs for chemical war awaiting destruction in the last Gulf war, a picture the MoD released yesterday

consistently since before the first Gulf war," said the source. "He is also unsure what would happen ... what the American response would be."

Nevertheless, it was revealed that the Ministry of Defence has sent supplies of vaccines, designed to combat chemical and biological attacks, to the Gulf to be distributed to British forces if necessary.

Military chiefs believe that Iraq has produced warheads capable of delivering chemical weapons, in particular mustard gas.

They also gave more details of the Iraqi biological weapons programme, including evidence that it had attempted to develop tularemia, described as a weaponised rodent disease, 30 times more deadly than anthrax. One source said: "[Saddam's] story could be a very chilling one, because he has some quite terrible weapons."

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Blair to address French Assembly

By John Lichfield in Paris

THE PRIME Minister will become the first British politician ever to address the French National Assembly next month.

Mr Blair is expected to make at least part of the speech in French. If so, he will not be the first British Prime Minister to make a formal speech in France in French but he may be the first to do it well.

Those who have tried it before, with limited success, include Winston Churchill, Edward Heath and most recently, a heavily coached Margaret Thatcher at the opening of the Channel Tunnel works.

The French public has been astonished by the Prime Minister's command of their language in the brief television interviews he has given since he came to office last year. Mr Blair worked in France as a student and has spent several recent family holidays in the South-west of the country.

Although no final decision has been taken, officials in the French Parliament say they understand Mr Blair hopes to give part or all of his speech in French.

A date for the visit has yet to be finalised but it is likely to be around 24 March.

Mr Blair will be only the fifth foreign head of state or government ever to address the National Assembly, the lower house of the French Parliament. His predecessors are King Juan Carlos of Spain, President Bill Clinton, King Hassan II of Morocco and the Italian Prime Minister, Romano Prodi. All but President Clinton spoke in French.

"This is a very new tradition for the assembly," said an official at the French Parliament yesterday. "No previous British

prime minister has been invited because, until the last few years, we never invited heads of state or government to address us in this way."

The formal invitation to Mr Blair came from the former French Socialist Premier, Laurent Fabius, who is now president of the assembly - something between the Speaker of the Commons and the Speaker of the US House of Representatives. The visit to Paris is also expected to include informal talks with the Socialist Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin, and the President Jacques Chirac.

Relations between Britain and France have been a little strained in recent weeks by the divergent approaches taken to the Iraq crisis. There have also been tensions on European issues, especially the exact nature of Britain's non-playing relationship with the countries who will join the Single European Currency next year.

Mr Blair and "Le Blairisme" retain a mostly positive image in France. The British Prime Minister is a favourite with French centre-right politicians and newspapers, if only as a stick with which to beat Mr Jospin and his more traditional approach to centre left politics.

In the last few weeks, however, there has been a re-examination of the adulation of Mr Blair. The left of centre news magazine *Marianne* devoted a column yesterday to Mr Blair's reported decision to block the House of Lords' attempt to end the Rupert Murdoch-inspired newspaper price war in Britain.

Marianne contrasted Mr Blair's "moralising" approach to politics with what it took to be his cynical decision to retain the support of the *Sun*.



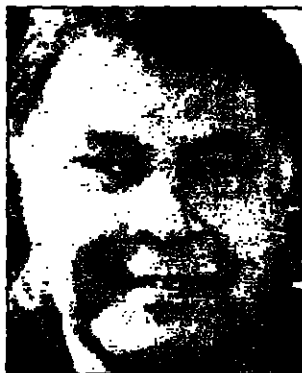
A Bosnian Muslim woman holds a photo of her son at a demonstration in Sarajevo yesterday demanding action over the missing. Photograph AP

Right wing admits conspiracy against Gonzalez

By Elizabeth Nash in Madrid

The former Spanish prime minister Felipe Gonzalez was not being paranoid when he said murky forces were out to get him. A leading right-wing commentator admits he and a clutch of disaffected journalists plotted to oust the Socialist leader after his fourth election victory in 1993, even at the cost of threatening Spain's young democracy.

"It was an assault operation," says Luis Maria Anson, former editor of the conservative *ABC* newspaper, now Spain's head of a Mexican media company, Televisa. "Felipe Gonzalez was a man of such extraordinary political power and skill that it was necessary to go to the limit and put the state at risk in order to



Gonzalez said that dark forces were out to get him

break him." Mr Anson's remarks in today's *Tiempo* news magazine, trailed in *El Pais* newspaper, appear to vindicate what Mr Gonzalez and his supporters claimed throughout his last term in office: that

his opponents, dismayed when elections narrowly cheated the conservatives of an expected victory, resorted to a strategy of increasing national tension to achieve his downfall.

Mr Anson's words have reignited a polemic that has rent Spain's chattering classes in recent years, has permeated every media outlet in the country and in which there is now no neutral ground.

Mr Gonzalez said that Mr Anson had revealed a "small part ... of a concerted effort to play dirty", and called upon him to tell the whole truth. "[Mr Anson] knows that the conspirators' plans were much more ambitious" than to replace Mr Gonzalez with a conservative government. This is taken to refer to supposed plans, aired at

the time, to provoke the abdication of King Juan Carlos and the establishment of a republic.

Mr Anson says that after the Socialists' narrow victory in 1993 a group of prominent radio, television and print journalists met regularly in his office to plan ways of "raising the threshold of criticism ... by probing the world of irregularities, of corruption." These efforts "reached such extremes that they frequently nudged the stability of the state."

In the *Tempo* interview Mr Anson admits "Mr Gonzalez was right when he denounced the threat ... but it was the only way to get him out. Not just because of possible abuses he had committed, if he had, but because of the risk there would never be an alternative gov-

ernment." Mr Anson recalled: "I didn't like sending my reporters on the road with Gonzalez because they would start off critics and end up *Felipistas*."

"I myself avoided meeting him ... I couldn't forget coming out of our conversations thinking: 'Why must I criticise someone so agreeable, seductive and interesting?'"

Among those named by Mr Anson is Pedro Ramirez, editor of *El Mundo* newspaper, which yesterday accused the Socialists of being the real conspirators.

They set up the undercover anti-Eta death-squads, the Gal, which killed more than 20 Basques in the early 1980s, then tried to cover up the truth and escape the punishment they deserve, *El Mundo* said.

Cyprus divide narrows after poll

By Rupert Cornwell

THE WEEKEND re-election of outgoing President Glavkos Clerides signals an intensified effort for a Cyprus settlement — amid hints of a more conciliatory line from Rauf Denkash, the hitherto intransigent leader of the Turkish Cypriots.

As expected, Mr Clerides' victory was paper-thin. The final results of Sunday's runoff gave him 50.8 per cent of the vote, compared with 49.2 per cent for George Iakovou, the former foreign minister, who was promising fresh ideas to heal the division of the island, split along ethnic lines since the Turkish invasion of northern Cyprus in July 1974.

The task facing him is huge — involving not only the search for a settlement with the Turks, but also Cyprus' entry negotiations into the European Union. "Now we need to get down to work," Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary said last night.

Alas, far from providing a catalyst for a settlement, the EU issue threatens to divide the communities further, with Mr Denkash insisting that the internationally-recognised Greek Cypriot government has no right to negotiate on behalf of the Turks.

Yesterday however the Turkish Cypriot leader seemed to yield some ground. Instead of demanding full recognition for his self-styled Turkish Republic of North Cyprus, he simply called for "direct talks" between "two peoples who have been ruling themselves separately".

Even assuming a genuine desire to create a single bizonal state, the gulf between the sides remains enormous. But Mr Denkash must contend with the appeal of EU membership to many of his compatriots. That yearning has increased all the more as Turkey's own problems have deepened, and an international embargo severs the Northern economy from the rest of the world.

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The Samaritans

Chefs become brand names

Why settle for Michelin stars when you can have a restaurant empire? Vanessa Thorpe talks to the new culinary kings

Every day Jean Christophe Novelli clambers aboard his moped, checks his mirror and speeds across London to call in, one by one, on each of his four restaurants.

"I have a need to be crazy," says the chef. "I am hyper. I am condemned to be like that. In one day I start at Novelli W8 and then I go to Les Saveurs in Mayfair and then I go in 10 minutes to Maison Novelli in Clerkenwell and then I go to the Novelli EC1 and then to cook at Les Saveurs and then I go back to EC1. And about once a month I go to my restaurant in Cape Town."

With his speedy bike, Novelli, well known for being at the cutting edge of food fashions, is now the most extreme example of the one of the most notable trends in cooking. Many of Britain's most famous chefs are no longer happy with one restaurant in which to display all their creative skills. Now they want to brand themselves with a series of eateries.

Celebrity chefs such as Antony Worrall Thompson, Marco Pierre White and Raymond Blanc enjoy so much acclaim that they are able to build up gastronomic empires at the drop of a *bain-marie*.

Soon it will be impossible, even at the very best restaurants, to know for sure that a genius – rather than a hired underling – has overseen the arrangement of the crescent of wild mushrooms on your plate.

The expansionist trend became firmly established in London last summer when Michelin-starred Marco Pierre White accepted an astonishing seven hotel-restaurant deal to crown his stewardship of Quo Vadis and The Criterion. Since then his bid for domination of the capital has been challenged by the 36-year-old Novelli and, on a smaller scale, by Alastair Little and Stephen Bull.

Dashing a few miles between different London venues might just be possible, but the chefs are now branching out to such an extent that they are opening restaurants in their name hundreds and even thousands of miles apart. Novelli, for instance, has another in Normandy and even one in South Africa, while Raymond Blanc has just opened a branch in Cheltenham.

The trend has appalled die-hard traditionalist chefs, and foodies too, who fear that quality can only be diluted by such franchising. Gourmets are wondering what can be happening to *haute cuisine* when one of the masters, Raymond Blanc – the man behind the legendary Le Manoir aux Quat Saisons in Great Milton, Oxfordshire – is happy to become a brand name.

One critic of the trend, the television chef Anthony Tobin, who runs The Dining



Jean Christophe Novelli: 'I have a need to be crazy. I am hyper. I am condemned to be like that'

Photograph: Tom Pilston

Room in Reigate, Surrey, warns that an eminent presence in the kitchen of a top restaurant is part of "a tacit bargain made with the patrons".

But in these days of the chef-as-showbiz-star, the crowds seem to love expansion. Take Blanc's opening of le Petit Blanc in Cheltenham. Four teenage schoolgirls from a nearby convent slipped out of their building, jumped over the wall and ran straight into town to attend the ritzy launch party for Blanc's £850,000 establishment.

That was one evening when you could guarantee Blanc would be in attendance. "These girls were amazing, so determined," he recalls. "The whole launch was absolutely amazing, in fact, especially when you think this place is supposed to be full of retired generals. We were packed out with people who love food."

Blanc was the last man that hard-line foodies expected to be seduced in this way.

"You can hardly accuse me of being imperialist," Blanc protests. "I have had many, many opportunities, but until now I have refused them categorically. For 14 years I have resisted all sorts of temptations. I knew that if I left the kitchen I would lose my heart, my core."

He insists that the recent birth of his two Le Petit Blanc brasseries, the first in the centre of Oxford last June, is a different thing altogether. "We don't intend to do a chain. It would be too boring. We just want them to be the best of their type."

Yet Blanc will admit that he is keeping an eye open for other suitable sites for the brasserie project, which is a joint venture with Richard Branson and Forte.

"We are being much more businesslike than ever before. When I opened another restaurant in Oxford 10 years ago I had a glorious kind of failure. We became much too good," he says, with customary chef-like modesty. "This time we will simply offer

quality and value and I will stay in my kitchen at Le Manoir."

This means that visitors to all future Petit Blancs will be paying for the Blanc concept rather than for any direct involvement from the great man himself.

Jean Christophe Novelli, whose venues have all opened up within the past two years, says he knows that becoming bigger is making him more vulnerable to criticism about the lowering of standards. His salvation, he believes, is in the hands of his staff.

"I know how far I can push. You can feel the potential of your business according to your staff. They are the most important part of the business. I cannot fail with them."

On a Friday night at his formal and discreet restaurant, Les Saveurs, in Mayfair's Curzon Street, some cranks in the Gallic veneer are evident. The wrong first course is brought to one table, while the correct dishes – of trout tartare and a terrine – take

at least three quarters of an hour to appear.

"Of course, it is impossible to be there all the time," says Novelli, "but I remember one American woman actually tried to sue The Castle at Bampton a few years back, because Gary Rhodes was not there on the Sunday night she visited."

Anthony Tobin argues that the tension between quality and expansion will always be there for a prestigious chef. "They are generally very poor people and, of course, there comes a time when they want to make money. And if they are fair to people, and if they are good, it will work."

Tobin has decided to stick with his own Reigate kitchen but, at the same time, to help run a chain of Italian restaurants with an entirely different cuisine to his own.

"After all," he explains, "you never see an empty Italian restaurant."

There are still a few purists left though, who, like Tobin's mentor Nico Ladenis,

have stuck to their stoves and stayed in the kitchen. Sally Clarke, of Clarke's in Kensington, is one such, although she suggests that it is all really a question of temperament.

"It is a team effort, but at the end of the day it should be down to me to get it right. It is my fault when we win and my fault when we fail."

After 13 years she has learnt to put Clarke's before everything else. "I know some people like Marco Pierre White, or Alastair Little, choose to spread themselves a little thinner. I guess it is just my problem that I want to be here to watch everything," she says.

Perhaps Raymond Blanc should heed his own words: "Chefs today only talk about how many guests they have and how many places they have. It is very dangerous because there have to be some parameters. A restaurant should be about hospitality."

'Meeting Mandela was the moment everything clicked together'

REVELATIONS

The time: 1990
The place: Wembley Stadium
The man: Jim Kerr of Simple Minds

I grew up in the south side of Glasgow at the beginning of the industrial decline. The writing was on the wall. Shipyards were closing and there was a feeling of fading glory; outside of London we had been the Empire's second biggest city, so I was surrounded by all the symbols of Glasgow's magnificent past.

It was a much more naive time than now – no heroin – and there was a lot of love about between the people who brought me up. So it's hard not to look back with rose-tinted glasses, but there was a real feeling of community, and values: the world begins at the bottom of your street, it doesn't end there. As it was a major port, lots of people had travelled, and we were building ships that would sail all over the world. It was fed down to us. I learnt that what goes on elsewhere in the world does matter, you can protest and make an impact.

My grandfather would tell me wonderful stories about India and South Africa, and his time in the forces fighting in the second World War. Not surprisingly, my favourite times at school were when we did a project on faraway places such as the Amazon and I was transported away from the life I knew. My father worked on the sites, but he was a voracious reader, so his head travelled. He rebelled against what was meant to be your lot in Glasgow.

It was travelling that helped

me gain a conviction for Simple Minds. My musical partner, Charlie Burchill, and I went hitch-hiking from Glasgow to London to see the Sex Pistols play. We'd heard about a new kind of music and we wanted to check it out. I remember waiting at Newport Pagnell for another lift, and it was the first time I had seen anybody of West Indian descent. I was consumed by the foreignness of everything. It all seemed so exotic to me – even the motorway service stations. I just wanted to stop and stare.

In fact we bypassed the concert altogether. The lifts went so well, we ended up three weeks later in a train station in Milan! Every time we crossed a border, I felt a sense of exhilaration. Up until then we had just sat around talking about forming a band, but the euphoria of this trip pushed us over the edge.

Charlie and I had bonded; with two people you can have your own little revolution and not accept your lot. Individually you can feel mad, but as a couple, the odds of both of you being fruitcakes lengthens. I needed to have a stab at expressing myself, even though I wasn't sure what to say. However, if you stick out your thumbs and go wherever the lift takes you it is amazing what can happen.

On a second hitching trip to London, we visited about eight record companies. With all the marble and chandeliers in some of the offices, we felt uncomfortable just leaving our demo tapes with the receptionists. On the way back we saw Bob Dy-



Photograph: John Voss

lan play to 100,000 people – which gave us plenty of inspiration. By the time our thumbs got us home, four companies had got in touch. Timing and luck, as in hitch-hiking, were all-important. The record companies had been so stung by some awful punk bands and a lack of melody that they were hungry for something new. We signed with Arista records, which had a hallowed building in Park Lane – this time we came down in luxury on the sleeper train. We were so keen, we stood outside on the pavement waiting for the offices to open.

For a while, the excitement of the journey and our growing self-confidence were enough. However, after achieving global success with *Once Upon a Time*, I had a hollow feeling. I had just sold 12 million copies of one album, and I was still thinking there had to be more to it than this. CNN and Oprah Winfrey invited us on to their shows: the world wanted to talk to me. Going on to *Goo Morn-*

ing America, it suddenly dawned on me: all those millions of people listening – but do I have anything meaningful to say?

Midway through the show the interviewer asked me who my heroes were outside of music. My reply was Nelson Mandela. At the time he was still in prison in South Africa, and I found myself on an anti-apartheid crusade before really thinking about it. My grandfather's stories came flooding back, of the beauty of Cape Town, but also how awfully they treated the blacks. I didn't think I had the answers – God forbid – but at least I had the questions. Simple Minds didn't leap on to a bandwagon; it was something inherent in us and in our music. We were fundamental to making the "Free Nelson Mandela" concert happen, as they needed a big-name stadium act to headline.

Our *Mandela Day* became the flagship song for the event. It was hard to write because he really was the man in the iron

mask; there was only one picture, which was 25 years old, and beyond that – nothing.

Following his release and a concert to celebrate his birthday at Wembley Stadium, I finally had a chance to meet Nelson Mandela. It was the most incredible experience. He was very playful, which made everybody relax, and he asked me about Glasgow. It was such an easy-going atmosphere, but he said something that I always carry with me: "When there was no voice allowed in South Africa, we could always somehow hear the voice of the artists, which gave us sustenance." It was a fantastically encouraging thing to say.

The biggest battle I have is with the cynic inside which says: what's the point, who cares? What will you achieve in the long term if you write a song or not? If there's a bad concert review, the next night there are thousands of people shouting for more, and it cleanses you. I can cope with everybody else's negativity, but until I met Nelson Mandela there was no hiding-place when I gave myself a hard time at two in the morning.

He is so right. Artists are always at the forefront of the trouble-makers – look at the Chinese authorities, and their fear that four poets on the Internet will bring down the country. I had a wonderful example of the impact of our music when I met a girl in the lobby of a French hotel who had started a fan club, and because of the idealism in our songs they have created a little orphanage in Bosnia. Meeting Nelson Mandela was a revelation. The moment when everything clicked together.

In June we will be playing

again to Nelson Mandela, in front of a vast concert during the World Cup to promote anti-racism. It is still an important cause for us; to this day I feel somebody humiliated it makes me feel physically ill. Both musically and physically I'm still on a journey. These

days Simple Minds are in an ugly duckling stage – too old to be the latest thing but not old enough to be a legend. It will probably take a couple more years before we come back into fashion, but I don't care. To a degree we're still making up Simple Minds as we go

along we've still standing on the music superhighway with our thumbs out."

Interview by Andrew G Marshall

Simple Minds' new single, "Glitterball", is out on Monday; the album *Neopolis* is released on 9 March.

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In June we will be playing



Look, no harps: Antony Gormley's 'Angel' spreads its wings over the A1

Photograph: David Rose

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's a Gormley

Andrew Lambirth looks on as Gateshead's 'Angel' finally takes wing

What is the purpose of public art? To please people or arouse controversy? Antony Gormley's *Angel of the North* rears against the skyline of Gateshead like a crucifixion. What does it represent? Sited atop an extinct colliery, it is intended to symbolise the glories of Britain's industrial past and hope for its future, but does it really do this? Gormley has said of an earlier version of the piece, entitled *A Case for an Angel*, that he didn't want it to be symbolic. "I want the work to be as actual as it can be, which is why my version of an angel is a rather uncomfortable mixture between aeronautics and anatomy."

Indeed, this great winged figure looks more like an aeroplane than an angel. From a distance, it appears remarkably modest, though it stands 65ft tall, with a wingspan of 175ft. From the train, a view of it is impeded until you are almost on top of it. From the road, it looks far more spectacular, though a clump of tower blocks is too close for comfort. Seen from its foot, looking up, the sheer bulk strikes home, coupled with an elegance of outline – the profile is meltingly sinuous. But of course it is the scale that principally engages.

Gormley's body-case sculptures, of which the *Angel* is a gigantic version, are cast from his own body. This might be thought faintly blasphemous when the sculpture is supposed to depict an angelic being, but no more so than a Renaissance artist painting his girlfriend as the Virgin Mary. Gormley creates a challenging image that is not intended to bring comfort, but to confront existence.

Nothing on this scale has been built in Britain before. Brancusi's *Endless Column* in Romania stands 96ft high but it doesn't have the mass of the *Angel*. Yet why did Gormley make the wings so huge? If the figure didn't look so balanced, you'd think they were out of proportion to the body. They act as a kind

It would all come out in the wash

That Marthe, she was never out of the bath. It's a wonder that Pierre ever got a look in. But when he did, writes Tom Lubbock, he gave a unique view of a marriage at work

There's a statue of a faithful dog in Edinburgh, but the human heroes of private life get few monuments. What could we have: the tomb of the unknown hubby? Well, there's Oprah Winfrey et al, offering a brief pedestal to personal struggles. But generally our heroes of heart and home are drawn from fiction and the already famous. One of the main reasons we have novels, soap-operas, tabloids, biographies is to provide such exemplary lovers, couples and families, and the lives of poets are often very good material: the Brownings, Oscar and Bosie, Tom and Viv, Sylvia and Ted, Larkin too (the emblem of a certain kind of single life). And then, from the lives of the artists, there's Pierre and Marthe.

The relationship of Pierre Bonnard and Marthe de Mélyny is a curious art-life cross-over. It isn't a biographical extra to Bonnard's art. Indeed, it offers little overt drama. Pierre met Marthe in 1893, when he was 26 and she

with Marthe sprawled naked, supine, post-coital on a rumpled bed – and imagine coming across a comparable image in someone's photo album, how you'd think "I probably wasn't meant to see this one" – or "I hope I wasn't" – because that sort of erotic showmanship would be rather nauseating. And with these Bonnards, it is a fine line. He doesn't convert his sex-life, like Picasso, into general sex-symbols. It's definitely this particular woman on show. But Bonnard saves the gambit through an intimacy so absorbed that it becomes unselfed. The viewpoint is clearly his, him standing by the bed looking down, but before him Marthe is lost, in herself and in the sheets that fold her body into their light.

There are no more such bedroom scenes after the ear-

been miserable, or miserably unequal, a sorry sort of shut-away mutual bondage, with her (on some accounts, basically a nutcase) wholly dependent on him, and him a dubious martyr, needing and nursing and using her dependence.

What does that do to the pictures? Make their intense plenitude claustrophobic, or the sign of an all-infusing, all-transfiguring love, or a resolutely denying and thriving fantasy? Perhaps rather an intimacy and habituation that can hardly tell the difference between these things. Marthe is everywhere, visible and invisible. Bonnard deals in *Mary Celeste* still-lives and interiors, which carry a human presence even when there is no person there, and in a kind of picture puzzle – there is a woman concealed in this scene, can you find her? – where Marthe either lurks inconspicuously but insistently, as a dim profile just inside the painting's margin, or is incorporated so thoroughly into the colour scheme that

'You wonder if this was a marriage of great convenience for an artist who bath-time got as obsessional for him as it did for her'

ly 1900s. But the point shouldn't be over-stated: the paintings are not a confessional documentary. They don't tell tales. The internal drama of the marriage is conveyed obliquely, and must to an extent be read in.

Take the many pictures of Marthe bathing. One way, they look like variations on an established theme, the "Nude in the Tub", and that's how Bonnard titles them. But evidently it is the same woman, and the same woman who appears clothed in so many of the interiors; and Pierre himself is present in these bath scenes, indicated by an intruding leg, or again just by a viewpoint – the viewpoint of someone who's in the room too, and close by. And when you know that Marthe, due to some mental or physical complaint, spent hours daily in the bath, the repeating subject becomes more than a theme. The bath seems a refuge or a prison, and you wonder if this was a marriage of great convenience for an artist who wanted to paint bathers – or if bath-time got as obsessional for him as it did for her.

Criticism of Bonnard's art easily becomes criticism of his marriage, and I don't see that this can or should be avoided, so long as you grant that marriage-criticism is at least as tricky a practice. Naturally the art only gives one side of the relationship (but that's an exemplary role too: all anyone has of their relationships is a one-sided view; how you deal with that one-sidedness is the issue). And then the paintings, with their saturating colours and sensory plenitude, seem to say it was all bliss, a paradise – while the facts suggest it must have

When Bonnard is alone, in his self-portraits – if you can call them that, because they're always the view in some mirror in the home, a moment of reflective solitude, not a set-piece self-image – he seldom looks happy. In the one called *The Bather* (1931), you see a puny man beating his fists in a tantrum. In one of the last, after Marthe's death, *Self-Portrait in the Bath-*

room *Mirror* (1946), he looks like a dead man himself. And the late bath-scenes, painted before and after she died, are rather frightening fantasies. Marthe's body never ages, but it acquires distortions that neither water nor a wide-angled view can explain. It floats corpse-like, it dissolves into its liquid cocoon and into the painting in the last one of all, into a sea of sour metallic hues no one would call paradisaical. One hardly likes to speculate what mixture of grief, remorse, nostalgia and resentment is to be fathomed here. An exemplary marriage: an abyss. The only clear image in this final picture is the basset, heraldic on a bright square of bathmat – as if to say, the man may be lost, but the dog at least is simply faithful to the woman's memory.

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The rhythm of life

When members of an orchestra invite young patients to make music, the subdued sounds of the hospital give way to joy. By Clare Garner

THE CHILDREN sat in a circle, wired to their drips, looking wan and apprehensive. Some were more severely ill than others, but they had in common the fact that they were sick.

"I want you to try and imagine a very different scene to the one you're in now," ventured Duke Dobing, a flautist with the City of London Sinfonia. "It takes place in ancient Greece, hundreds of years ago, when there was no electricity, no radio, no television and, no music."

Young Daniel Flaherty's head crept up from underneath the sheets like a tortoise coming out of his shell. He propped himself up in bed and tuned in. For a hour last Tuesday afternoon children from the paediatric ward in Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, in west London, quite forgot they were ill. The chapel where they were congregated was transformed into a communal concert hall, as a cacophony of sounds swirled about the ceiling and the children gave themselves up to the music.

This was "The Music that Heals", a one-hour workshop run by four musicians from the City of London Sinfonia orchestra. They are run monthly, for children, the elderly, expectant and new mothers, and HIV patients as a therapeutic session.

Duke sat in the middle of the room, relating the Greek legend of Pan and Syrinx, just as a father would read a bedtime story. His aim, however, was not to send the children to sleep, but to awaken them from their ill state

and spark their imaginations.

Pan, the god of fields and woods, fell in love with Syrinx, a nymph, but Syrinx "didn't feel the same at all". Syrinx turned herself into a reed in order to hide from Pan. And then Pan heard something he had never heard before - the wind blowing through the reeds. He picked a reed, not realising it was the very one which Syrinx had turned herself into. "Pan at one go had invented the flute and music," concluded Duke.

Along with the flute and music, Pan unwittingly invented a medicine. The therapeutic power of music is well-documented. It was first described in the Bible, when David played the lyre to Saul and he was "refreshed, made well and the evil spirit departed". Even 2,000 years ago, flute-playing was said to ease sciatica; modern research has since suggested that music releases endorphins, the brain's painkillers.

Back in the workshop, it fell to the children to set the story of Pan and Syrinx to music. "Do you think you could make some hoofy noises with that?" asked Duke, selecting some brightly coloured "kids' bongos" from the collection of percussion instruments spilled out on the floor. "We thought this would be good river music," suggested Christine Jackson, a cellist with the City of London Sinfonia, wheeling a xylophone in the direction of Daniel's bed.

Daniel, six, looked distinctly dubious. He slunk back, almost in danger of disappearing beneath the covers again. But his curiosity got the better of



Doing the rivers: Daniel Flaherty turns his hand to percussion based on the legend of Pan

Photograph: Rui Xavier

him. He tentatively stroked the golden tubes with his fingertips and was rewarded with a singing, tinkling sound. He did it again. And again and again.

Daniel was not alone in being shy at first, but with a little encouragement the children all banged and shook their instruments, sometimes at a fast and furious pace, and at other times gently. "Now we need our mysterious water music on its own," instructed Duke. Daniel responded by running his fingers up and down the xylophone with huge, expansive sweeps, lost in music.

"What have you forgotten?" asked Duke. "What about making noise with your mouths?" At once they embarked on a chorus of frog noises, swishing

reed noises and whistling. The occasional interruption of a bleep from a drip was the only reality check.

Suddenly, one boy looked desperate. His bandaged arm was hurting and the musicians were quick to catch on. He put down his instrument, but he didn't want to leave. Instead he sat and listened, quietly, with a far-away expression.

Next came the story of the hare and the tortoise. "What do you think you can learn from that story?" asked Christine, after telling the tale. "I'll tell you: that some of us take longer and work harder. Some of us are lazy. The people who work harder and keep going, in the very end they are better." Such a moral was

poignant in the circumstances.

At the end of the hour-long workshop Duke thanked everybody for being "a fantastic orchestra". The children smiled. They were exhausted, but contented. Daniel said that he had been happiest "when I was doing the rivers," but that he had also enjoyed "the rabbit one".

Lily, 13, who had had an "external fixator" taken out of her leg the previous day, said she had had reservations about coming to the workshop. "I thought it would be a bit boring," she said, "but it was quite nice actually, playing lots of music and that. When you start playing music, you get into it. It was quite nice hearing it and knowing the different stories." The music had distracted

her, she added. "I didn't think about my leg at all," she said. "I just carried on with the music. It sort of relaxes you."

The hospital workshop is just one example of the activities undertaken by orchestras across Britain, be it in hospices, prisons, residential homes or schools. During National Orchestra Week, which runs from 9-15 March, more than 30 of the country's professional orchestras will perform to the public free as a mark of their commitment to interacting with the community.

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, which opened in 1993, is the first new NHS teaching hospital to be built in London since the Seventies. It is unusual in that it integrates the visual

and performing arts into healthcare. All the funding for the arts is privately raised from individuals, businesses and charitable trusts.

Susan Loppert, director of the arts project at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, has masterminded the interactive arts programme. "What we're doing is not therapy," said Ms Loppert. "They are not music therapists, but it's therapeutic. It's part of the philosophy of the hospital, which is positive and uplifting."

To find out more about orchestral activities in your area, ring Freephone Talking Pages on 0800 600930, and ask for the Association of British Orchestra's National Orchestra Week.

A Porton patient for seven days' pay

WHEN the Government announced it was opening a telephone inquiry line for the 20,000 servicemen who acted as ill-informed guinea pigs at Porton Down Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment in the Fifties, I decided to call. It was my chance to discover what I was exposed to as an 18-year-old national serviceman.

It was in 1952 at an RAF base just outside York that I read that an extra week's pay would be given to volunteers willing to go for a week to an establishment on Salisbury Plain. And to get there meant travelling first to London, my home town, providing me with the opportunity of two consecutive

BRYAN BREED

weekend leaves. It was in that casual manner that thousands of young men endangered their well-being. Some have maintained that subsequent illnesses have been linked to their experience.

There was no verbal mention of nasty things like nerve or any other toxic gas, chemical or biological warfare, but together with the 20 or so other fresh-faced youths I joined that Sunday in deepest Wiltshire I was asked to sign a piece of paper stating that I was offering my services willingly.

That first evening we attended the Naafi and spent some of our extra week's pay on a concoction called black velvet. There was scant discussion of why we were there.

On the first occasion I was called into the laboratories I was asked to sit outside a chamber the size of a small room and breathe some through a mouthpiece which protruded from its glass wall. On the second occasion, two or three days later, I went for a blood test. I felt nothing except the prick of a needle.

The guinea pigs have now been told they will be sent a summary of their records, providing it is considered that doing so will not breach security. I feel fine, even nearly 50 years later, and I am merely curious about my own particular inhalation, but the helpline operator said she is doubtful whether they would tell me what it was. I suppose, speaking personally, if you've waited all those years to know, another year or two won't matter. But for others among the 20,000 it might well be a matter of life or death, or at least a more comfortable last few years.

The hotline is 0845 6039140.

As an emergency, an itch doesn't come up to scratch



DR PHIL HAMMOND

"MORNING Mr Jacobs. What can I do for you?"

"Itchy bum."

"Splendid. Were you aware that Saturday morning surgery is for emergencies only?"

"Yes."

"Well in my book, that ain't an emergency. Bum on fire, fine. Bum concealing baby crocodile, fair enough. But itchy bum, no. Good day."

"Oh you think you're so clever, don't you?"

"Clever enough to know you can wait until Monday."

"But this is an emergency. You told my son he had worms."

"Your son does have worms. He brought one in to show me in a Playdoh jar."

"I don't believe you."

"Well I haven't kept it - it was only a threadworm. Nothing to lose any sleep over."

"How can you say that? You told my wife the whole family was probably infected - I haven't slept since, thinking of all those horrible little things crawling around inside me."

"They're only in your towels."

"You told my wife that the eggs can get under the fingernails."

"So?"

"Well, the wife's got long fingernails and she likes to draw blood during sex."

"Anywhere special?"

"My back, mainly. So she could have passed eggs straight into my bloodstream, right?"

"Look, there are worms that live in the bloodstream - such

as the dreaded schistosome fluke - but threadworms only survive in the intestines."

"How do you know it was a threadworm?"

"It looked like one."

"But you didn't send it to the lab. for confirmation?"

"No."

"So you were guessing?"

"Look, it wasn't a fluke."

"Why not?"

"Because flukes are flatworms with oral and ventral suckers. This worm was a thread."

"It could have been a fluke fluke."

"Also, schistosomes are unheard of in Walthamstow, whereas threadworms aren't."

"So how did Lance get it?"

"Probably from nursery."

"That's a shame."

"Why?"

"Because he's settled in really well at Mrs Pope's."

"You don't have to take him out of it."

"No son of mine's learning to read in a worm hole."

"Look, threadworms are no big deal. Five-hundred-million people on this planet have got them as we speak. Many have no symptoms at all and others just have an itchy bum."

"But surely Mrs Pope should have spotted the worm in Lance's lunch?"

"You don't swallow the eggs, you swallow the worms."

"And where are the eggs?"

"Like I said, under someone's nails."

"How do they get there?"

"Well, the adult worm lives in the large bowel but pops out to lay eggs around the anus."

"I've heard enough."

"But the good news is that nearly all patients are cured by a single dose of wormicide - and you can buy it over the counter to avoid troubling your doctor on a Saturday morning."

"I don't like giving the kids drugs."

"Well, if you cut everyone's nails, wash the eggs off bedclothes and towels and have scrupulous personal hygiene, the worms die out after a month or so."

"That's a bit of a fag."

"Or just live and let live."

"But I'm itching like mad. Does that mean I've definitely got them?"

"No, it could just be that the suggestion you might have them has brought it on. If you can't find a worm in your stool, the best way of making the diagnosis is to sleep with Sellotape around your tail end, to catch the eggs as the worm pops out at night to lay them. Now, if that's all..."

"Do you sell Sellotape?"

"No. Bye bye."

"One more thing. Why did you call the schistosome dread?"

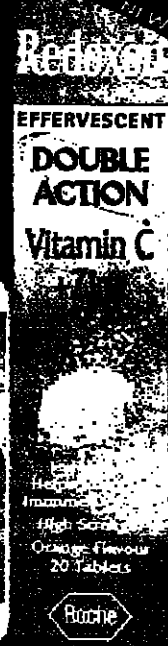
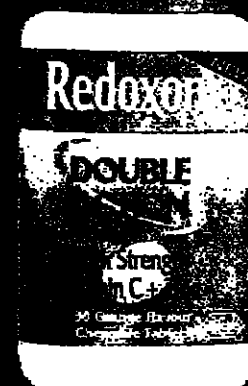
"Good grief. Because the eggs get stuck absolutely everywhere - in your bladder, in your liver, in your lungs, in your brain ... it's not pretty ... Mr Jacobs? Come back! Look, I've got some cracking photos of it in Post Mortem Weekly ..."

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Mr Straw should think again. The judiciary has a real role to play



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Jack Straw thinks British policemen are wonderful. So wonderful, indeed, that he is minded to turn down the Hillsborough Victims' Support Group in its demand for a fresh inquiry into the stewarding of the ill-fated game by the South Yorkshire police force. The Home Secretary, however, does not think British judges are anything like as wonderful. He stood up in the Commons yesterday to say as much. Of course he did not use those exact words - he does, after all, rely on judges to make the criminal justice system work. What he said was that British judges cannot be trusted, they don't have much common sense. That, at least, seems a reasonable interpretation of his remarks about the press, privacy and the Human Rights Bill.

The European Convention on Human Rights, which is being incorporated into British law, contains two clauses especially relevant to the activities of the media and the citizen. One broadly asserts the right of citizens to privacy (especially against the

state) and the other asserts the right of the press to report widely and freely (especially against abuses of power by the state). For every claim a public figure might make under the privacy clause, the press has a valid counter-claim under the press freedom clause... provided reporting has been in the public interest. There is a lot of legitimate ground between the two. "I think," said Lord Bingham, Lord Chief Justice, last autumn, "this is difficult and debatable territory." "Quite so: the courts are going to have to weigh contending principles and make fine judgments according to the merits of the cases before them. Is there really any good reason for worrying about the fitness of judges to effect a balance?"

There is a case for saying we should not wait for the haphazard process of building a privacy - and press freedom - law by fits and starts. A draft Bill promoted by newspaper editors is in circulation which seeks simultaneously to establish a right of privacy and a right of investigation, in

the public interest. Mr Straw would win friends - not least in our quarter - if he picked that up and ran with it. Instead he seems to be going off at half cock. To judge from yesterday, he has been persuaded by tendentious and self-righteous arguments from right-wing newspapers and the right-wing peer who heads the Press Complaints Commission, Lord Wakeham, that a "right to privacy" is somehow dangerous. The courts - this presumably will be the effect of a proposed government amendment to the Human Rights Bill - must not be allowed to define the PCC as a public body and entertain suits which try to force the PCC to uphold its own rules about invasion of privacy by newspapers.

If that is the Government's position, it is half-baked. It is no excuse that Mr Straw's boss, the Prime Minister, seems to have been nobbled by ecclesiastical interests who seem to think, in their divine wisdom, that bishops and ministers do not have nor should be troubled by human rights. The

Government seems to be forgetting what it said, eloquently, in Opposition.

The problem is why people are motivated to go to the courts for redress. Judges are invited to adjudicate cases of invasion of privacy because citizens despair of the political process. It is when people decide, rightly or wrongly, that they are not going to get justice from Parliament or government offices that they turn to the courts. During the Thatcher and Major eras, Labour spokespeople applauded this development, and the growth of judicial review that it encouraged. They implied that if and when they got to power, people would once again start trusting the political system and so the call on the courts to redress wrongs would be lessened. Will they? The answer lies in Labour's hands: the faster it gets on with the job of parliamentary reform and modernisation, the smaller the scope for the judges.

Litigiousness is not some epidemic disease. Britain does not have to go down the

American road and see its social and political life corrupted by a plague of court cases. Take schools, recently infested by lawyers. Having rid them of corporal punishment, parents and teachers were left confused over exactly when and how discipline demanded "force" to be used on recalcitrant pupils. ("Pupils" these days is a category including hulking great teenagers of both sexes, strong and often angry: pity their teachers.)

Hence the new guidelines published yesterday. These will never be enough to prevent a bloody-minded parent going to law. None the less, they represent the way forward. The Government is making positive law in order to clarify right and wrong; it must also seek to alter the climate of opinion, to carry parents and teachers (and children) along with it. Nothing here is going to stop anyone seeking to apply the provisions of the Human Rights Bill - but they will affect the judicial and social climate within which they are actionable.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor
and include a daytime telephone number.
Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.
Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

LETTERS

EU arms code

TODAY, Britain and France table their proposal for a European Union Code of Conduct on arms exports. Could Europe finally be about to place principles before profit in decisions on arms exports?

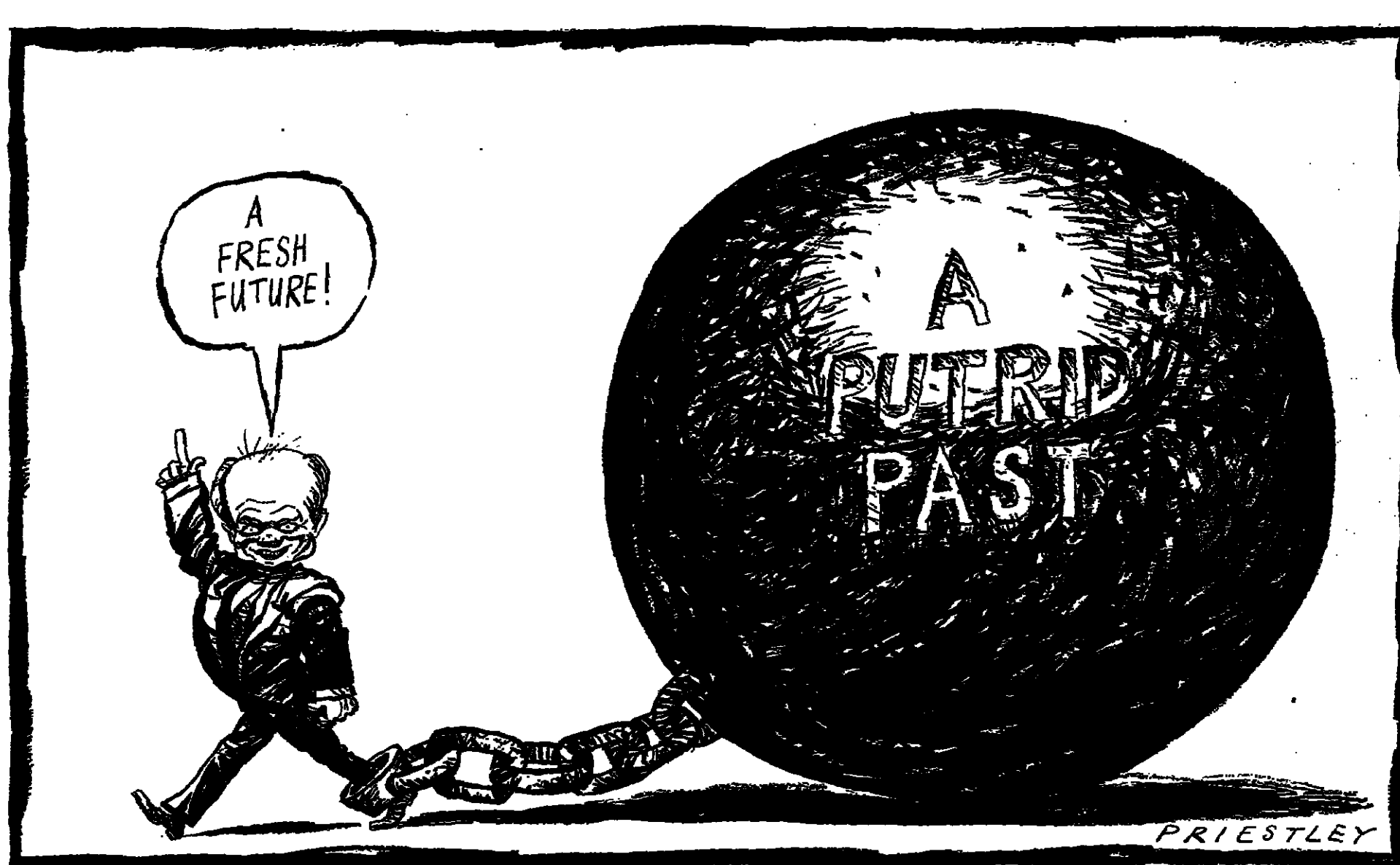
EU countries account for 40 per cent of all arms exports to the developing world. All too often, countries suffering from dictatorial regimes, poor human rights records or other forms of social instability have filled their armories with European technology. In fact, developing nations have increasingly become the weapons industry's main target market. The easy availability of European arms has enticed many Third World nations to spend more on weapons than on health and education programmes, further depriving already impoverished and suffering populations.

We firmly believe that controlling the irresponsible sale of weapons is central to alleviating many of the devastating international social problems we face today. For this reason, a demanding European Code of Conduct would be of great importance. The British government must be commended for its initiative.

But if the Code is to bring real reforms, it must go still further. We are concerned that there are a number of loopholes in the proposed country criteria. To be truly effective, the Code must have guidelines which are more restrictive and explicit: in addition, it must be accompanied by clear consultation procedures, common end-use controls and increased parliamentary scrutiny and accountability.

We consider a demanding European Code of Conduct to be an essential building block for the International Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers - a proposal which we Nobel Peace laureates have formulated with fourteen of our colleagues. As the EU begins debating the British and French proposal, we greatly hope that they will seize the opportunity to make a significant contribution to international human rights, development and security by insisting on a strict Code of Conduct that will serve as a model for the rest of the world.

Dr OSCAR ARIAS
Nobel Peace Prize Winner 1987
Professor JOSEPH ROTBLAT
Nobel Peace Prize Winner 1995
JOSE RAMOS-HOIXA
Nobel Peace Prize Winner 1996
London WC2



Strike on Iraq

ROBIN COOK ("We must act", 14 February) asserts that the aim of any military action against Iraq would be to diminish Saddam Hussein's ability to deploy, conceal and recreate his chemical and biological weapons.

Does the Foreign Secretary seriously believe that such military action will break Saddam and force him to comply with the US-dominated inspection teams? Think how many can be killed by a single dumb bomb and think of the fateful consequences of a sustained military strike for the innocent Iraqi people.

It is impossible to eliminate Saddam's weapons of mass destruction without eliminating Saddam himself. How can you be sure that Saddam's ability to produce biological weapons is diminished when these weapons can be produced and concealed in room-sized basement laboratories?

The Foreign Secretary himself said on 20 January that Iraq

is still manufacturing enough anthrax each week to fill two missile warheads. This production was continuing while the inspectors had been uncovering and dismantling these weapons of mass destruction. Saddam has already spent years evading the inspectors and has forgone billions of dollars in oil revenue that he might have had. So he will continue to evade and a military strike is not going to stop him. Clearly the best alternative would be to have inspectors who can inspect, i.e. broadly based and not dominated by representatives from the US.

In the long term a new political strategy is needed. This strategy should be based on supporting a democratic alternative to Saddam, no more punishment to the Iraqi people, implementation of UNSC Resolution 688, trying Saddam as a war criminal and helping the Iraqi people to hold free elections. Dr MOHAMED AL-RUBAI
Iraqi Democratic Movement
Woodford Green, Essex

AS in the First World War, the aims of war against Iraq are clear but the means are so hopelessly ill-adapted to achieving them that the war itself seems pointless.

It is not hard moreover to discern an irrational motive - a personal animus against Saddam Hussein and a desire to inflict humiliation on him regardless of the effects on others, of the degree of international support and of longer-term policy priorities. Only this is it possible to make sense of the US refusal to concede an inch on sanctions - the obvious diplomatic way out. Personal vendettas are no substitute for a proper policy. NICK MARTIN-CLARK
London N8

ROBIN COOK's article contains a breathtaking assertion: that "the stability of the entire region is at risk" from Saddam Hussein. I doubt it; but it certainly would be if the knee-jerk boys in the US get their way and Saddam is toppled. There would be an unholy battle over the corpse of Iraq with Islam-

ic fundamentalists, Sunnis, the Shias and the Kurds bidding for support. Talk about the mother of all wars...

KEN CLARK
Bedford

MANY people, to judge from letters in your newspaper, feel upset that military action against Iraq is being considered.

Never mind the starvation and deprivation that the Iraqi people endure, Saddam Hussein continues to build up his personal wealth regardless. So there may be some bombing of his seven (or is it eight?) palaces. I have no problem with this. SIMON GARDINER
Croydon, Surrey

Privacy law

YOUR report "PM against privacy law" (12 February) reveals some very confused thinking on this topic at the heart of government.

Upon the incorporation into British domestic law of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), there

will be both a right of privacy and a right to freedom of expression. UK judges will have no choice but to balance these rights in any particular decision, effectively creating a tort of breach of privacy with a defence of legitimate public interest; in so doing, they will have regard to the existing body of case law under the ECHR.

In extreme cases, where damages would be an insufficient remedy, the court could prevent publication by injunction; but all the experience of defamation law suggests that such cases would be rare.

It would be wholly wrong for such an extreme power of prior restraint to be exercisable by a voluntary body such as the Press Complaints Commission (PCC). Indeed, following the incorporation of the ECHR into UK domestic law, the usefulness of the PCC may well be called into question generally, as Sir Louis Blom-Cooper rightly observed, "Self-regulation will always protect the self."

PHILIP GOLDENBERG
Woking, Surrey

Cancer treatment

WE are assessing the impact of receiving aromatherapy massage or relaxation therapy, used alongside conventional anti-cancer treatments, on patients' quality of life. We are not attempting to see if these therapies provide an alternative to conventional anti-cancer treatments. So we are keen to redress any misunderstanding conveyed by the headline "Natural therapies to be tested as cancer cure" (23 January), describing our planned trial. In fact, all the patients being studied will have advanced cancer, i.e. their cancer cannot be cured.

Dr SUSIE WILKINSON
Director of Studies, Liverpool
Marie Curie Centre
Professor AMANDA J RAMIREZ
Professor of Liaison Psychiatry,
Guy's & St Thomas's Medical
& Dental School
Dr JANE MAHER
Senior Lecturer in Clinical
Oncology, Mount Vernon
Cancer Centre

Save the arts

OXFAM's protest about tax deductions for arts projects (letter, 13 February) refers to current patterns of charitable giving. The present balance of giving to the top 500 voluntary charities is dramatically weighted against arts, recreation, youth and education. Together their annual revenue amounts to £54m - just 3 per cent of the total of £1.76bn. International aid receives £378m and animal protection £133m.

To redress this balance Lord Birkett and myself, and many others, lobbied for several years for a national arts lottery. Its aim was to bring to the UK the enhanced emotional life which the practice of the arts can help to stimulate. In addition we sought a balanced physical life, with enough recreation to keep people healthy, and thus reduce the state's huge health bill.

To see £133m going to animal protection but so little to the shaping of balanced lives here is to understand why our crime rate is so high. Young people without a habitual pattern of filling their spare time with useful hobbies, artistic expression and sport can fall into drink, drugs and criminality.

Now is the time to redress this balance, which is one reason for the formation of our charity. Oxfam's work is invaluable, but it needs to be complemented by the protection of the quality of living habits for all here and now, which can transform the social habits of the whole country.

DENIS VAUGHAN
Executive Director
Council for the Advancement
of the Arts, Recreation and
Education
London WC2

Dangerous women

ON learning that the British Boxing Board considers women unfit to fight because they become "emotional and vulnerable during periods" ("PMT makes women 'unfit to box'", 13 February), I found myself worrying about the clearly unsuitable jobs that women have been allowed to get away with for so long, such as supervising and educating young children, ministering to critically ill patients, and operating potentially dangerous electrical equipment such as cookers, irons and sewing machines.

SHIRLEY COULSON
Milton Keynes,
Buckinghamshire

My philosophy is to get your kit off - for operational reasons of course



MILES KINGTON

From time to time I like to bring you a round-up of new words or new usages in current English, a kind of part-work glossary, and I think it is time to offer a few more examples of the way in which English is changing as we move towards the millennium.

Absolutely: A mild form of "yes". Documentaries: A kind of television programme about a famous person, of whom there is so little film footage available that an actor has to be hired to impersonate him.

Editor: 1) In television and film, a very minor person whose job it is to make sure that all the pictures sort of fit together. 2) In radio, a very important person who controls *The Archers*. 3) In the press, a very very important person who does exactly what the proprietor wishes.

Epic: An adjective meaning, filmed in several different countries at enormous expense. Icon: 1) A small drawing on a computer screen. 2) Any person whose great days

are over but who is still admired by any other person, as in "Shirley Bassey is a gay icon", "Vidal Sassoon is a hairdressing icon", "The Queen is a royal icon", etc.

Iconic: Said of a comedy show which is slightly different from its predecessors. Irish: Name given to new pubs with shiny wooden facades in Rome, Tel Aviv, Beirut, Stockholm, etc.

Islam: A kind of religion whose adherents believe that God listens to them five times a day.

Kit: Trendy new term for clothes, as in "Get your kit off". **Kit and the Widow:** Presumably, widow's weeds.

Literature: This used to mean a whole collection of great novels, poems, plays, etc, but now it means a small pile of brochures, as in "Shall I send you some literature on that?"

Mic: A new abbreviation for "microphone". It is starting to take over from "mike", as in "Open Mic contest". Nobody

quite knows what has caused this development, as "mike" was a perfectly good abbreviation and did at least look like the way it was said, which "mic" doesn't. Maybe it has come about because "mic" is the written abbreviation on tape recorders.

Millennium: AD 2000 is said to be the millennium, because it is the year that marks the end of the 20th century. However, the original meaning of "millennium", was 1,000 years, so whatever we are celebrating must be something that happened 1,000 years ago. However, nothing happened in AD 1000. The only thing that anyone really seems to want to celebrate is the birth of Christ, which was 2,000 years ago. So millennium must now mean "a period of two thousand years".

Mobile: This used to be a kind of revolving sculpture that dangled from the ceiling, but is now just a toy telephone.

Monitor: A verb meaning, To ignore. To

do nothing about, to treat with apathy, as in "We are monitoring the situation on a 24-hour basis".

Operational: Unfathomable, unknowable, mystic, awesome, as in the announcement: "We are sorry for the late running of this train. This is due to operational reasons."

Oxymoron: Sudden fashionable alternative for "contradiction in terms". Philosophy: The thinking behind a football manager's actions. Eg. "My philosophy is to win matches by beating the other side, but I think it's important to entertain as well, and also to buy a foreign footballer with a funny name whom the home crowd can become fond of".

Power: This is the new term which has replaced "On/Off" on machines.

Quote: This is quite different from a quotation. A quotation is something witty or stylish which has been repeated so often it has

gone into the language. A quote is a brief soundbite from someone famous which is picked up by a researcher and handed to an interviewer for discussion, as when Ned Sherrin says to a visiting actor: "I rather liked your quote the other day when you said that playing Hamlet was like trying to remember the sort of person you were 10 years ago", and the actor can't remember having said it and doesn't have the faintest what it means, but has to discuss it anyway, because it's a "quote".

Scientist: One who can explain how life began 10 million years ago but has no idea how BSE began 10 years ago.

Something: A curious expression which used to be a swear word (as in "You something something!") but is now a number (as in "Thirty-something" or "Forty-something").

Tribute: An obituary on television. (To be continued.)

The Tories take a few baby steps towards democracy



**DONALD
MACINTYRE
PARTY REFORMS
HAVE EFFECTS**

It's a curiosity of the rules unveiled yesterday for electing the Conservative leader that had they been in force when John Major stood down, William Hague might not have had the job at all. Ken Clarke was easily the most recognisable of the available candidates outside Westminster; he came out well on top in the polling of constituency chairmen, and would probably be Leader of the Opposition under the one member one vote ballot envisaged in yesterday's blueprint of a new party organisation. And a lot would therefore now be different – not least the view Tony Blair would be taking of how difficult it would be to win a referendum on a single currency. This may look like a pointless "what if", to be left to the seductive world of virtual history. But it illustrates an important truth about the restructuring of the party achieved by William Hague in a few months as leader. The changes will have a real world effect quite out of proportion to the scant attention they will receive outside the Conservative Party at a time when that party is deemed not to matter.

They also, broadly, live up to the claims Hague is making to be an unexpectedly fast moving and determined party reformer. In organisation, if not yet in policy, Hague has shown that he has learnt a good deal from the cautionary tale of Labour's attempted – and very nearly successful – suicide by slow poisoning after the 1979 election defeat. He has moved a party with not the slightest culture and history of membership democracy to a one member one vote system. And he has done it without the painful transitional stage in which power in the Labour Party in the early 1980s was seized from the MPs only to be handed to the most determined activists instead. It's easy to mock some of the conclusions of the so-called membership survey which preceded yesterday's paper. It's hardly surprising, for example, that 98 per cent of Tory members agreed "that a Single Party should be created with one constitution and common standards of performance and integrity". It's rather more so that even 2 per cent were prepared to flirt with the implicit alternative, that it would be better for Conservatism to be several parties with conflicting constitutions and varying tolerances of incompetence and corruption. But behind these banalities lurks an impressive effort to revitalise a desperately aged and shrunken party in which Hague has taken on some of its most entrenched interests – including a deeply self-important backbench parliamentary leadership – and emerged in most cases unscathed.

A lot of this, of course, was borrowed directly from modernised Labour and from the Liberal Democrats. Both of these had long realised that you don't recruit to a modern political party unless the members have a share of the power in return. True,

the main change is limited to the election by the full membership of the leader from a shortlist of two chosen by the MPs. And yes, despite claims to the contrary from Hague's circle, the new system is likely to make it somewhat more difficult to unseat the leader. First, 15 per cent of MPs – anonymously if they wish – have to seek a no confidence ballot, and then the leader has to go if he fails to secure a simple majority – and will not be able to stand in the subsequent election. But given that the membership tend to favour the incumbent – and may therefore pick the potential successor politically closest to him or her – some of those most hostile to an unpopular leader may, paradoxically, be wariest of replacing him. What's more, the very fact that the membership will now have a voice may make the parliamentary party more cautious. But that hardly makes Hague invulnerable (disastrous results even in next year's European elections could put him in some danger) or wrong to bring the members into a choice which neither of the main parties now leaves to its MPs.

In other cases the internal democracy may be more Leninist than real. But that is hardly so different from Labour. The plebiscite on the manifesto will be, like Labour's, a demand by the leadership for endorsement by acclaim from a wider membership of proposals over which it has had only the most limited influence. (Given the vociferousness of the pro-EMU minority in the party, it may actually be a rather livelier affair than Labour's was before the 1997 election.) Democratic centralism lives too, in a practical and little noticed proposal designed to ensure that wholly unsuitable candidates are not picked by local parties in by-elections. Just as the Labour NEC can impose shortlists, so Conservative Central Office will now provide – for the first time – a list of selected candidates from which local parties have to choose. Although constituencies parties will be able to seek approval for a favoured local candidate this is a limited but significant erosion – entirely consistent with New Labour behaviour – of constituency autonomy.

Labour yesterday made a great deal of how the changes would not include one member one vote elections to the party Board – the nearest equivalent to the NEC – or to the party conference. And it's a sign of the cultural resistance to internal democracy in the Tory party that the survey exposed only limited demand for it. But the Labour attack neatly glosses over the fact that both the NEC and the party conference are becoming, by Tony Blair's explicit design, less rather than more influential in the formulation of policy. There is another reason, too, why Labour may seek to mute its criticism of Hague's new proposals: by avoiding a complex and inherently unstable electoral college for the party leadership elections, Hague has been able to boast that the electoral system will genuinely be one member one vote. Labour's, by contrast, still includes a 33.3 per cent share of the vote in leadership elections for the trade unions. One effect of Hague's changes will be to make, once again, the institutional influence of the unions in the Labour Party an issue of public debate.

It used to be said that Margaret Thatcher's reforms – particularly, but not only, those which democratised the trade unions – helped to save the Labour Party from itself. The changes which Hague announced yesterday are a necessary but not a sufficient condition of a recovery which cannot yet be guaranteed. But it may also be that – this time by example – Labour's modernisation will in turn, and in time, help to save Conservatism from itself.

A Cassandra who had much to teach an aspiring war reporter



**ANNE
MCELVOY
WOMEN AT
THE FRONT**

Like a lot of first-time war reporters, I set off for my first battlefield in the disintegrating Yugoslavia with Martha Gellhorn in my mind and my luggage. My mother had given me a dog-eared copy of *A Stricken Field* as a kind of talisman because she associated her with survival.

When people have that quality, it is hard to believe that they are mortal. One of Martha's closest friends said of her yesterday, "I just never thought she'd die." This was her ninetieth year. But somehow, dying did not become her.

In *The Face of War* she wrote, "War is a malignant disease, an idiosyncrasy, a prison, and the pain it causes is beyond telling or imagining; but war was our condition and our history, the place we had to live in." It still is. She left us on the brink of yet another war and we can already write the script she knew so well from Spain, from the Second World War and Vietnam – cratered earth, suffering civilians, human shields, bombs, bombs and more bombs. For all the talk of surgical war and precision targeting – "official devil", she called it – the results on the ground are remarkably unchanged.

It is the eternal, messy, uncontrollable quality of modern warfare that she evoked so well – that and the fact that whatever the rights and wrongs of a particular conflict, we fail our fellow men and women if we do not look upon the human horrors as well as the victories and defeats of conflict.

Her idea of the most immoral war was one in which the outside world does not get to know the fate of the casualties.

Her subject was not only war: it was the people of war, the civilians caught up in the strategy of generals. "I thought it would be fine," she wrote in 1939, "if the ones who order the bombing and do the bombing would walk on the ground some time and see what it is like." She had an amazing capacity to retain scores of images in her mind at once from a place she had been in for a short length of time and then to string them together in a coherent whole. Not since Joseph

Conrad has anyone combined the skills of novelist and reporter so productively.

In later life, she remarked that she belonged to the "Federation of Cassandras", for she had come to have little faith in the ability of journalists to prevent evils. Still, she had "no time for that objectivity shit", and expected reporters to make moral judgements on what they saw. The responsibility to report remained, nonetheless, and she advised newcomers "to limit yourself to what you see and hear and not suppress and invent".

To that extent, she was a product of the photographic age (and she loved photography). For her, the reporter was the written equivalent of the camera's shutter. The immediacy is apparent from the first page of any report of hers you read; her technique of heaping images fast, on top of each other, looks easy – until you try it. Sitting in the restaurant of the Esplanade hotel in Croatia in 1991 reading *A Stricken Field*, it was eerie how the mood recalled the novel's powerful opening description of a hotel dining room on the eve of war in Europe 40 years before: the sickly excitement, the competition for sources, the hum of egos: the hyperactive, edgy atmosphere. The most fitting collective noun for a group of journalists holed up together is an insecurity.

As a role model for women journalists, she was unbeatable. When I first tried to freelance from Eastern Europe as a student, I found a world of journalistic bureaucracy, faithfully replicated not only by the Communist authorities but by the correspondents themselves. Old hands said that there were places you couldn't go and people you couldn't see because

I learnt from Martha Gellhorn that the single, greatest advantage of being a woman in wartime is you are not taken seriously

you didn't have this mysterious thing called "accreditation". I didn't really know what that was and was damn sure they wouldn't have given it to me anyway.

Then I read Gellhorn's description of setting sail in a hospital ship for D-Day after her husband Ernest Hemingway had swiped her accreditation: "A military policeman stopped me and asked me my business and I said I was just going to interview the nurses, the women's angle, for *Colliers*, the American magazine I was working for. Nobody gave a hoot about the women's angle. It served like a perfectly forged passport. As soon as I got aboard, I found a toilet and locked myself in."

you can get on with doing what you want without arousing more than passing curiosity. And any young reporter can learn from her that the worst thing you can do is get hung up on rules which have been expressly formulated to waste your time and divert you from what is really happening.

Gellhorn was always honest about the gaps in her knowledge – far more so, it seems to me, than a lot of women writers on war today who feel that in order to be taken seriously, they must appear to command the language of military expertise. "Battleships, destroyers, transports – I know nothing of ships," she writes in the middle of her brilliant description of

will be regarded as more fearful than their male colleagues.

I did not always agree with Gellhorn's political assessments. To the end, she refused to acknowledge the extent to which the carnage of Spain and the slaughter of the International Brigades was engineered by Stalin for his own purposes. I don't suppose I would have agreed with her about the justifications for war against Iraq either – there was

an anti-American streak in her which was as unbending as it was instinctive. Of the unified Germany, she remained profoundly and, it seems to me, unfairly suspicious, trapped in the perceptions of 1945.

But it didn't matter. You could read and learn from her humanitarianism, be fired by the power of her writing and her haunting sense of place even if you didn't share her sturdily socialist view of the world.

Her last piece of "war reporting" was from Wales last year, where she returned to one of the scenes of the miners' strike and vividly described the aftermath of battle between Margaret Thatcher – "ruthless and clever, like a general" – and Arthur Scargill – "a fool". Once again, it was the poor bloody infantry who paid the price. We will always need voices to remind us of them. Hers was the brightest and the one we will miss most.



Martha Gellhorn, in 1944, reporting from the Italian front

Photograph: Hulton Getty

The best way to save the arts is to remove the single payer



**ANDREAS
WHITTAM
SMITH
CHARITY TAXES**

This newspaper's campaign to persuade the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reform the tax system along American lines and thus "Save the Arts" has got off to a good start. The letters in support are developing the argument and identifying key issues. Daily newspapers can indeed work with their readers to change government policy.

It is important to see clearly what the American system comprises. The US government itself gives little directly to theatre companies, orchestras, museums and the like; instead they are supported by individual donations which, up to very high limits, qualify for tax relief. In effect the government helps the arts by providing donors with a tax deduction.

There is a further point about the American example that its British supporters need to take on board – it is not confined to donations for the arts. Any giving to any charity qualifies for tax relief. This must be correct. I do not see how the arts in the United Kingdom could be given tax advantages that were unavailable to other types of charitable activity. This point was raised by the financial director of Oxfam, David Nussbaum, in a letter to the editor published on Saturday. He was right to argue that the campaign requires consideration across the voluntary sector. And his further point, that such a widening could undermine the covenanted system under which Oxfam now receives numerous small-scale donations, would have to be met.

On the other side of the Atlantic, then, arts institutions survive if, by networking, they can attract a sufficient number of individual backers. In effect there is a free market in donations supported by tax relief. If individual A turns you down, you go to B, and if not B, then C and so on. In this country, if they are to obtain the funds they need, cultural bodies must persuade the relevant committee of the great and the good and its officials. Everything may depend upon a single source. Failure to convince one body can be fatal. For instance, my

fellow columnist on these pages, Trevor Phillips, as chairman of the London Arts Board, has had to take the agonising decision to withdraw the grant upon which the Greenwich Theatre depends. It will probably close down as a result.

It is because I greatly prefer the liberal, unbureaucratic system in the US that I wholeheartedly support the campaign. I also know that there is no chance that this country will follow the Continental pattern, where national or regional governments handsomely support cultural institutions. To see what

probably now outclass the equivalent rooms in the British Museum, which had the reputation of being the best in the world outside Cairo.

I had hoped that the Lottery would be an effective British way to achieve similar results. Indeed the arts have greatly benefited, so far as new buildings are concerned, but they nevertheless find themselves in a traditional quandary. It is much easier to find the funds for premises than it is for running costs. The same problem faced our Victorian ancestors when they wanted to erect new churches

state support at its present levels, even if the Government allows a switch to the American system of tax deductions for private donations. They want it all; no "either/or".

I think that this is unrealistic. The best way of persuading the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make a change is to offer a bargain. I would say to Gordon Brown that if the state would funnel its help to the arts by means of an easy-to-use system of tax deductions for individual donors, scrapping the many restrictions that the Inland Revenue currently imposes, then the

in the tax relief granted to donors to the arts offset by a fall in public expenditure. The cultural institutions would experience the reverse of this – more funds from individual donors, less from the state. But even in this preliminary situation, I think the arts would be better placed. Their sources of finance would have been diversified. And they could feel themselves more masters of their own destiny, less dependent upon government policy.

Then the cultural institutions would find out whether adopting the American method of tax deductions for private donors would allow them to do better than break-even as compared with the present arrangements. At least there would be no ceiling. The harder any institution worked at raising funds from individuals, the greater the reward. Some institutions would flourish in the new circumstances and some would not. But the failures could hardly complain, as Greenwich Theatre does today, that the system itself was unfair.

Let the debate continue. The main difficulty for me at the moment is the Oxfam point. What sort of bargain could the Chancellor be offered which would, over time, provide a net benefit for cultural institutions without harming the rest of the voluntary sector?

On the other side of the Atlantic, arts institutions survive if, by networking, they can attract a sufficient number of backers. In effect, there is a free market in donations

this means, readers need only visit the hugely ambitious refurbishment and expansion of the Louvre Museum in Paris which has just been completed or travel to any regional capital in Germany and go to the local opera house. These countries hold the arts to be a public good which the state or local government naturally finances. The neglect of the British Museum would be inconceivable elsewhere in Europe. As a result the Louvre's new Egyptian galleries

in the fast expanding cities. Businesses who had done well out of the Industrial Revolution could be persuaded to cover the costs of bricks and mortar – and stained glass windows. But it was much harder to get them to underwrite the salaries of the vicar and curate and other running costs.

Being in a similar situation, the attitude of the cultural institutions is that, as well as receiving lottery funds, they should also continue to obtain

increased private giving thereby stimulated should in time allow the whole apparatus of the Arts Council, with its grant giving powers and expensive overheads, to be wound up. This, after all, is the American pattern – generous tax relief, little state aid.

To begin with, under this scheme, the effect on the British Exchequer and on our cultural institutions alike would be neutral. From the Government's point of view, it would see a rise

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Somerfield in talks with Kwik Save on £1.2bn merger deal

By Nigel Cope
City Correspondent

The consolidation of the supermarket sector took a dramatic step yesterday when Somerfield and Kwik Save announced they were in talks that could lead to a £1.2bn merger. The deal would bring together two of the weakest players in Britain's cut-throat food retail sector which is increasingly dominated by the likes of Tesco, Sainsbury and Safeway.

Both Somerfield and Kwik Save have been struggling to maintain sales and market share in the face of increased competition from both the "Big Four" supermarkets and the low price continental discounters such as Aldi and Netto. Kwik Save in particular has been plagued by falling sales, a weak brand and a poor store portfolio.

A combined Somerfield and Safeway would be Britain's fifth largest supermarket group with 1,400 stores and combined sales of £6bn. The new group would account for 7 per cent of the UK grocery market, behind Tesco, Sainsbury, Asda and Safeway. It is therefore considered unlikely that the deal would run into regulatory problems. Somerfield is thought to envisage substantial benefits in increased buying power and reduced costs.

The City was unimpressed with the prospect of a merged

Somerfield and Kwik Save saying it would only delay the problems of the two groups. "There may be some short-term benefits but the longer term growth potential is still difficult to identify," said Frank Davidson, food retail analyst at ABN Amro.

Paul Smiddy at Crédit Lyonnais said: "I am not overwhelmed by the logic of it. It seems to indicate that neither company can find a bidder." Another said the deal would still be a distant and very weak fifth behind the big players. "I know there are a lot of global mergers going on at the moment," one analyst said. "But this really is nothing more than a tiny pimple by comparison."

The announcement follows constant speculation that Asda and Safeway are still considering a deal after news of proposed merger talks between the two leaked last September. That deal foundered on regulatory concerns.

A merged Somerfield and Kwik Save is unlikely to trouble the big players unless it starts undercutting significantly on price. But it will increase the pressure on other "second tier" supermarket groups such as Iceland, Morrisons and the Co-op.

It is thought that the catalyst behind the talks were the major shareholders in Kwik Save, which include Dairy Farm and the fund management

group PDFM. Both have been concerned about the performance of their investment as Kwik Save shares have slumped from 84p to 30.7p since 1993. Talks between the two companies started late last year.

The deal is certain to lead to store closures and job losses. There is thought to be a store overlap of around 200 outlets which may be closed. One head office is also likely to close with further cuts in distribution and administration. Analysts estimated that the cost-cuts could yield savings of £50m-£100m.

It is not yet clear whether both trading formats would be retained though it is thought that Somerfield will be the dominant partner with some Kwik Save stores being rebranded. It is possible that Kwik Save name would be retained as a discount offer together with Somerfield's Food Giant stores which compete at the lower price end of the market.

Though announced as a "nil premium" deal it is clear that Somerfield would be the dominant partner. David Simons, Somerfield's chief executive, is likely to head the enlarged group as Kwik Save's chief executive Graeme Bowler has already announced his intention to step down in August.

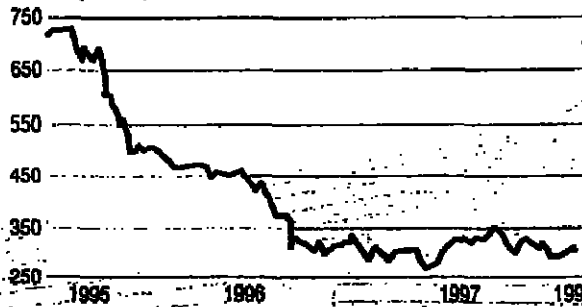
If the merger is structured as a "newco" - which would take over both groups - it

A marriage of convenience

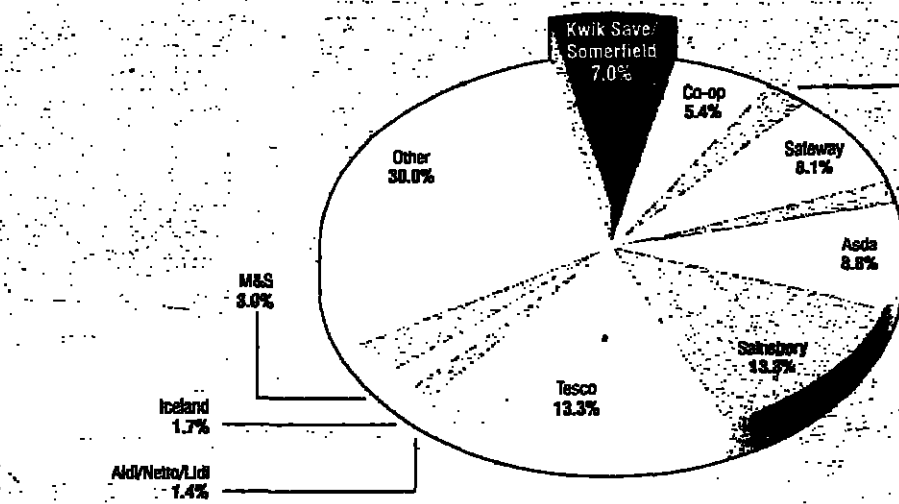
Kwik Save

Sales: £3.01bn
Pre-tax profits: £74m
Market Value: £476m
Number of stores: 880
Staff numbers: 25,000
Head Office: Prestatyn
Chief executive: Graeme Bowler

Share price, pence



Grocers market shares



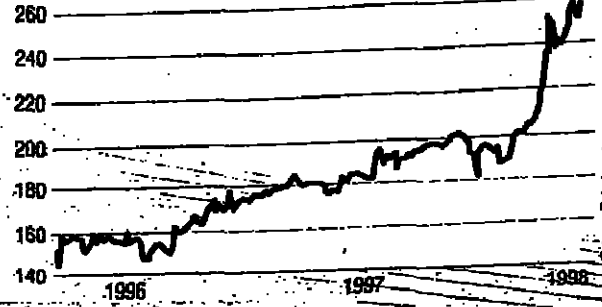
would trigger significant share options pay-outs to Somerfield directors. At the current share price, Mr Simons is holding a package of £970,000 on his 869,000 options. He also holds 1.1m options under a long-term incentive plan.

Kwik Save has been a disastrous performer in recent years. In November it announced an 18 per cent fall in profits to £74m and a six per cent fall in like for like sales. It has spent millions of consultancy fees to Arthur Andersen

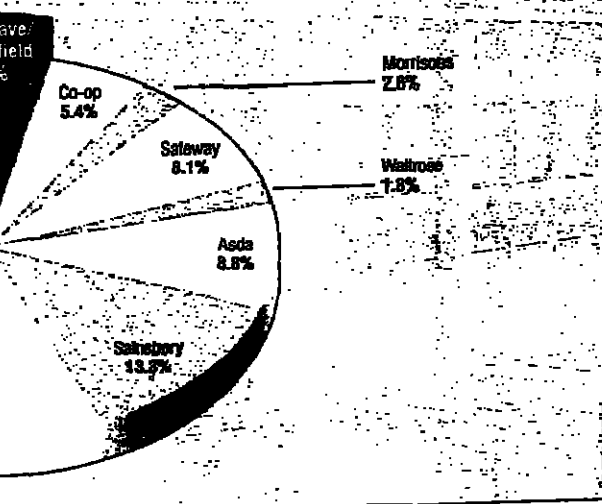
Somerfield

Sales: £3.4bn
Pre-tax profits: £115m
Market Value: £765m
Number of stores: 586 (446 Somerfield, 113 Food Giant)
Staff numbers: 23,716 (full time equivalents)
Head Office: Bristol
Chief executive: David Simons

Share price, pence



Grocers market shares



and has been looking to roll-out its "New Generation" stores with better store layouts and lighting as well as more own-brand ranges. It has also been closing some of its worst-performing stores.

Somerfield shares have done well since the former Gateway business struggled on to the stock market in August 1996. But it, too, has found difficulties in increasing sales and has been closing around 30 stores a year.

Outlook, page 21

Merged bank revises UBS job losses

By Lea Paterson

Half of the 400-strong workforce in the London-based equities division of UBS, the Swiss bank that is merging with SBC, was facing the sack yesterday, fewer than initially expected.

The UBS staff - including numerous highly rated analysts - failed to secure jobs at Warburg Dillon Read, the new investment bank.

The two banks intend to roll out their new equities department under the Warburg Dillon Read banner on 2 March. Affected employees are being summoned by telephone and told whether they have secured jobs at the new bank. But by mid-afternoon only a handful of staff had received calls.

One analyst said: "I haven't been told yet - very few people have. I think it's going to be a three day thing."

At 4pm UBS staff, most of whom spent the day anxiously sitting by the phone, were informed that, if they had not yet received a call, they would not be spoken to until at least tomorrow. This development - described as "incredibly frustrating" by one source - led to an exodus from the equities floor as analysts packed up for the day.

High-profile casualties of the merger include John Aitken, the banking analyst, and Richard Hannah and Matthew O'Keefe, the transport team. All three were highly rated by the City.

Mr Hannah has been an outspoken critic of the various fundraising attempts conducted by SBC Warburg on behalf of Eurotunnel.

David Robins, head of UBS in Europe, is another big name expected to fall by the wayside. Mr Robins is currently heading the integration of SBC and UBS, but has not been offered a permanent post at the bank. Sources expect him to leave once the merger has been completed.

Colin Buchan, global head of equities at the new bank, yesterday confirmed the banks initially considered cutting many more UBS jobs, but raised the number of offers as management became increasingly impressed with UBS employees.

Other sources attribute the change of heart to intense lobbying by Hector Santos of UBS, a well-respected City figure and joint European head of equities at the new bank.

News of the cuts came as an independent survey revealed the combined force of UBS and SBC. *Institutional Investor* magazine said SBC Warburg's equity research topped the league tables for the seventh year in a row. UBS came third.

Outlook, page 21

Thorn warns on profits as chief makes shock exit

By Andrew Yates

Thorn, the troubled Radio Rentals group, announced the shock departure of its chief executive yesterday and warned that current-year profits would be at the lower end of market expectations. Investors took fright, sending the shares down 6 per cent to 146.5p.

Steve Marshall, who has been Thorn's finance director since 1995 is replacing Mike Metcalf as chief executive. Mr Metcalf will receive a pay-off of around £350,000, equivalent to one year's salary.

Mr Metcalf was expected to remain to oversee a vital strategic review at Thorn designed to reverse a dramatic slump in its share price since it demerged from EMI, the music group. But he surprised the market by deciding to leave before this review had been completed.

"A lot of work has been done and we will make a decision on the future of the company within the next few

months. Mike had to decide whether to see through the implementation of the plans or hand over to somebody else," Mr Marshall said.

He insisted that Mr Metcalf left the group by his own accord and was not under any pressure from institutions despite the slump in the group's value.

Analysts believe Thorn is now likely to break itself, with some of the proceeds from its disposal programme likely to be handed back to shareholders. Mr Marshall confirmed that one option under consideration was the sale of Rent-A-Center, which is a market leader in the US with more than 1,400 stores.

Thorn admitted yesterday that it was facing further litigation worries in America over the terms of rental contracts. The group faces new law suits in New York, Alabama and Massachusetts having already been ordered to pay \$127m (£75m) in damages in two US states. The group will have to wait at least six months to hear the re-



Mike Metcalf will receive a pay-off of £350,000

sult of an appeal against one of those decisions.

Industry sources suggested Thorn was also considering approaching Granada, the leisure and media group, to discuss a marriage between its rental business and Radio Rentals. Such a merger would create severe competition concerns.

Christmas trading at Radio Rentals was disappointing due to a fall in customers renting personal computers, despite a reduction in prices.

This poor performance saw profits at Thorn fall by almost a third to £88.6m in the nine months to December, causing analysts to downgrade profit forecasts by at least £5m to around £120m for the year to March.

Thorn admitted that trading in the UK was likely to remain tough but said that it had no current plans to close any more Radio Rentals branches after shutting down 90 sites last year.

Investment Column, Page 20

S&N buys 311 pubs for £206m as Nomura starts mass sell-off

By Andrew Yates

The dramatic shake-up of Britain's pub industry gathered pace yesterday as Nomura, the Japanese investment bank, kicked off a disposal programme which could see it sell at least 1,000 of its tenant-estate.

Scottish & Newcastle signalled its intention to expand rapidly its managed house estate by buying 311 pubs from Nomura, which recently became Britain's largest landlord, for £206m. The pub and brewing giant, will use the new sites to roll out brands such as Rat & Parrot, Chef & Brewer and John Barras community pubs.

Brian Stewart, chairman of S&N, said: "This was a unique opportunity for us. This will enable us to accelerate our successful expansion of our managed estate. It is difficult to find new sites and we believe we have paid a fair price for good locations."

S&N will now embark on its own wide-scale reorganisation of its pub estate. It is likely to

launch a disposal programme, selling hundreds of pubs from its tenant-estate and some of its worst performing managed houses to make room for its latest purchases.

Nomura is looking to continue its sell-off as it attempts to slim down its pub business ahead of an eventual flotation or trade sale. As part of this plan Nomura now plans to allow 300 dissident tenants the right to be freed from the "tie", a system that forces them to a buy beer through the landlord. These tenants are part of a large group of disgruntled publicans who are taking legal action against Nomura to declare unlawful a former tie which they claim forced them to buy beer at unfair prices. By freeing these pubs from tie, Nomura hopes to clear the way for their sale.

The group still faces the prospect of several key court cases this year which could pave the way for millions of pounds worth of compensation claims.

Nomura bought the pubs last September as part of a

£1.2bn deal to acquire the 4,300-strong Intreprenuer and Spring Inns chains.

Of the 311 pubs sold, 70 are already managed houses or on short leases. However, 240 of the sites have tenants with long leases which S&N would have to buy out to convert them to managed houses.

S&N is paying £662,000 a pub, compared to the average of £275,000 a pub Nomura paid for Spring Inns and Intreprenuer.

S&N estimates that the total cost, including refurbishment of the sites, will rise to £1m a pub.

However, analysts believe that S&N is not paying over the odds. "The price paid does not look cheap but S&N has been able to pick the best sites and in the long term should be able to make a lot of money out of them," said one analyst.

Britain's pub industry has been in turmoil in recent months with the rise of new and powerful independent operators as the big brewers continue to sell off their tenant-estate.

partner of Ernst & Young, which last week dramatically called off its planned merger with KPMG, said it was unlikely that his organisation would be a suitor.

Meanwhile, Coopers & Lybrand and Price Waterhouse, which sparked the current round of merger mania by announcing last September their plans to create a worldwide firm with about £12bn (£7.3bn) in revenues, insisted that their deal was still on track.

Outlook, page 21

Andersen link-up with City law firm would pose bold threat to legal profession

By Roger Trapp

Arthur Andersen, the accountancy firm, is believed to be on the verge of merging with the City law firm Wilde Septe in a move that would represent the boldest threat to the legal profession to date.

Although many leading accountancy firms have set up internal legal practices with a view to countering the declining profitability of their core audit markets, this deal would be a big challenge.

Wilde Septe is a long-established City firm with about 80 partners and more than 200 other fee earners spread between the UK and international locations including Brussels, Paris, Hong Kong and New York.

Andersen, which last year gained about £15m of revenues from Garretts and Dundas & Wilson, its UK legal operations, has long been keen to put such activities on a par with those that it has in other parts of the world, notably France.

According to today's issue of *The Lawyer* magazine, there has been mounting speculation in the City about such a merger, with one top firm already understood to be devising a strategy for countering the threat. It claims that Wilde Septe has been in discussions with Andersen since the accountancy firm's talks with another City firm, Simons & Simmons, broke down late last year.

The firm is said to have been in talks with several leading accountancy

firms, although merger talks between four of the biggest firms - KPMG, Ernst & Young, Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand - have created uncertainty in the field.

Steven Blakeley, Wilde Septe's managing partner, fuelled speculation about such a link-up last year, when he said that combining with a big accountancy firm could provide his organisation with the international name and resources it required. Neither firm would comment on the report last night.

The report comes as the dispute between Andersen and the Andersen Worldwide organisation appeared to deepen. Andersen Consulting, which intensified the long-simmering row by shortly before Christmas calling for an arbitrator to intervene, late last week applied to a US court for an injunction preventing the accounting arm from continuing with actions that it claims will derail the arbitration process. The court in New York is due to reconvene in two weeks.

The two sides are divided over the payments the more profitable Andersen Consulting makes to the audit firm of which it was a part until 1989 and other issues concerning the structure of their relationship. But there is speculation that they will agree to an out-of-court settlement.

Some observers are even suggesting that a formal split between the two Andersen units could lead to Andersen Consulting linking up with another consulting firm. However, Nick Land, UK senior

partner of Ernst & Young, which last week dramatically called off its planned merger with KPMG, said it was unlikely that his organisation would be a suitor.

Meanwhile, Coopers & Lybrand and Price Waterhouse, which sparked the current round of merger mania by announcing last September their plans to create a worldwide firm with about £12bn (£7.3bn) in revenues, insisted that their deal was still on track.

Outlook, page 21

STOCK MARKETS

Indices	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5619.90	37.60	0.67	5675.10	4189.10	3.23
FTSE 250	4991.90	1.70	0.03	4998.90	4384.20	3.20
FTSE 350	2678.60	14.90	0.56	2698.20	2075.70	3.21
FTSE All Share	2609.38	-0.20	-0.01	2426.20	2162.10	2.99
FTSE SmallCap	2425.00	3.50	0.27	1348.50	1225.20	3.42
FTSE Health	1320.90	0.20	0.02	1138.00	965.90	0.97
FTSE AIM	8270.10	0.50	0.01	8990.00	6356.78	1.66
Dow Jones	8270.10	0.50	0.01	8990.00	6356.78	1.66
Nikkei	16775.52	-15.49	-0.09	20910.79	14488.21	0.92
Hang Seng	10124.03	-150.57	-1.47	18820.31	7908.13	3.88
Dax	4320.64	18.18	0.40	4597.26	3171.05	1.78

INTEREST RATES

Short sterling	UK 10 year gilt	US long bond
1.20	7.45	5.93
0.13	6.96	5.48
0.34	0.82	1.96
0.34	3.77	4.88

Money Market Rates	Bond Yields
3 month 1.20	1 year 5.93
6 month 1.20	2 year 5.92
9 month 1.20	3 year 5.92
12 month 1.20	4 year 5.92
15 year 1.20	5 year 5.92
20 year 1.20	6 year 5.92
25 year 1.20	7 year 5.92
30 year 1.20	8 year 5.92
35 year 1.20	9 year 5.92
40 year 1.20	10 year 5.92

Main Price Changes	Prices	Chgs	% Chgs
Kwik Save Group	307.50	17.00	5.85
Intreprenuer	170.00	9.00	5.29
Thorn PLC	580.00	31.00	5.35
Diageo PLC	221.00	10.00	4.74
Booker PLC	221.00	10.00	4.74

CURRENCIES

\$/£	DM/£	¥/£
1.6380	1.6170	0.6105
2.9770	2.7487	1.8185
206.51	201.21	126.03
104.00	98.00	108.80

Other Indicators	Prices	Chgs	% Chgs
Gold (\$)	280.35	-1.50	-0.53
Silver (\$)	7.09	0.09	1.24
Base Rates	7.25	6.00	

TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.3736	Italy (lira)	2.672
Austria (schillings)	20.35	Japan (yen)	204.10
Belgium (francs)	59.76	Malta (lira)	0.6282
Canada (\$)	2.3025	Netherlands (guilders)	3.2624
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8459	Norway (kroner)	12.13
Denmark (kroner)	11.10	Portugal (escudos)	205.19
Finland (markka)	8.8506	Spain (pesetas)	244.61
France (francs)	9.6947	South Africa (rand)	7.7381
Germany (marks)	2.9047	Sweden (kroner)	12.99
Greece (drachmas)	458.45	Switzerland (francs)	2.3378
Hong Kong (\$)	0.28	Turkey (lira)	353.035
Ireland (pounds)	1.548	USA (\$)	1.5989

Source: Thomas Cook
Rates for indication purposes only

Hopes of extra value propel BAE higher

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

Hopes are running high that British Aerospace will accompany record-breaking profits on Thursday with a package of value-enhancing deals.

Last year the once-ailing group flew in with profits of £456m. This time round there are expectations it will hit £590m, lift the dividend 25 per cent-plus to 20p a share and throw in a hefty share split, perhaps four-for-one.

Developments on the Arlington property side are also likely, so is the sell-off of BAE's 21 per cent shareholding in the Orange mobile telephone group.

It was enough to propel BAE shares 62p higher to 1,775p, within hailing distance of their peak.

BAE has also been helped by the success and likely flotation of Airbus Industrie, where it has a 20 per cent interest. Airbus is on the verge of getting a \$4bn Latin American order.

BAE's high flying performance is attracting overseas investors. They have lifted their shareholdings to 29.28 per cent of the capital, uncomfortably close to the 29.5 per cent limit.

If they stray above the ceiling the last to arrive on the share register will be forced to sell, which could depress the price. The Government is thought to be near to lifting the ceiling.

The rest of the stock market turned in a solid if featureless display with Footsie climbing 37.6 points to 5,619.9, just 9.8 from its peak. With New York closed, the market was left to plough its own furrow, which contributed to the rather dull display.

Still the bids continued to roll. Somerfield and Kwik Save confirmed they were in "all premium" merger discussions. Somerfield, where Asda has displayed a passing interest, fell 3.5p to 253p

and Kwik Save gained 17p to 259p.

B Elliott, once a giant of the machine tool industry, added 5p to 106.5p after its management produced a £45m cash offer and among the tertiary oil shares Sibir, off 5.5p at 28p, mounted an agreed share exchange offer for its parent, Pentax, down 3p at 17.5p. Car dealer Alexanders motored 5p to 19.5p after saying it was in bid talks. Healthcote, a health support group, rose 6p to 87.5p on a management buy-out at 90p.

Bas, thought to have lost the tender battle for Intercontinental Hotels and Resorts to the US Marriott International group, rose 16p to 950p. The company has cancelled analyst meetings pencilled in for this week. Ladbroke, out of the intercontinental running, rose 1.5p to 284.5p.

Marston Thompson & Evershed, the Burton-on-

Trent brewer, firmed 3p to 259p as managing director David Gordon departed. Thora, the rental group, lost 9p to 146.5p after chief executive Mike Metcalfe left following a profit warning.

Chemical group Courtaulds hardened 6p to 269.5p despite sell advice from stockbroker Sutherlands. British Petroleum fell 8p to

787p with SG Securities suggesting the "tide has turned" and shares should be sold.

For a time financials put on another storming display as the story of a Barclays bid for National Westminster Bank went the rounds again. NatWest ended 34p (after 43p) higher at 1,174p and Barclays, figures today, closed up 45p (after touching 59p) at 1,931p. Abbey National rose 35p to 1,219p and Lloyds TSB 7p to 900p.

ML Laboratories fell 6p to 125.5p after Glaxo Wellcome dropped an option on one of its products. Shire Pharmaceuticals rose 4p to 339.5p as stockbroker Pamure Gordon cut its current year's profits forecast but lifted its estimate for the following year.

This year's figure has been slashed £1.2m to £4m largely because of an acquisition. Next year's forecast is now £15m, up from £12.6m.

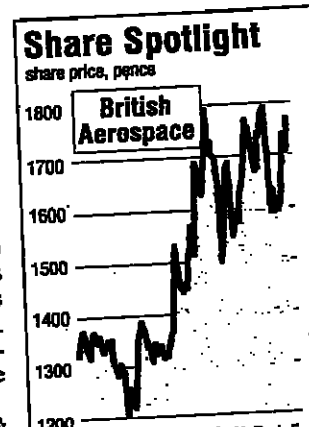
Tadpole Technology had

another tantalising session, hitting 62p at one time. The shares closed at 46.5p, up 12.5p. They have soared from around 10p on stories of a major contract and the arrival of stockbroker Colin Blackburn with 3.1 per cent. The company said it "has nothing new to report".

The shares have become the darling of small investors. Turnover has been heavy. Volume was put at more than 15 million shares yesterday.

Little Bula Resources, the Irish oil group which already has more than 1.6 billion shares in issue, created a few more - 90 million. They were placed at 1.125p a share with Capital International, a US fund manager, which now has 14.7 per cent. Bula held at 1p, putting a £20m value on the company.

In heavy trading Emerald Energy went to a 9.5p peak, up 1p. A statement is expected this week about its Colombian exploration.



TAKING STOCK

Euro Sales Finance, which arrived on AIM at 11.15p in June 1995, jumped 35p to 210p. Interim figures, due tomorrow, are likely to emerge at more than £400,000. In its last full year Euro Sales, which specialises in providing services for small companies, produced £563,000.

Colin Forsyth, founder of the Pan Australian unit trusts, is chairman of The Sandwich Bank and Crust Co, which is on its way to offer. It is raising £950,000, selling shares at 30p. The group produces sandwiches, has a van sales fleet and is building a chain of sandwich bars.

IAE, an investment finance group with interests spreading from a fleet of nine Boeings to property in Kiev, lifted interim profits 113 per cent to £1.1m and should achieve £3.6m for the year. The shares rose 5p to 117.5p, a year's high.

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
Alcoholic Beverages							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
Food Producers							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

Share Price Data
Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is the latest twelve months' dividend gross of tax as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by the latest year's earnings per share, excluding extraordinary items but including dividends. Other financial ratios: Dividend Yield = Dividend / Share Price; P/E Ratio = Share Price / Earnings Per Share. All prices are as at 11.00am on 17 February 1998. Source: Bloomberg

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(75 p.p. London EC2A 4PP) 0891 729 0280

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
Market Leaders: Top 20 volumes							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
FTSE 100 index by hour							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
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30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

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High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

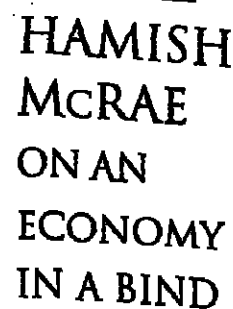
52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	30.48

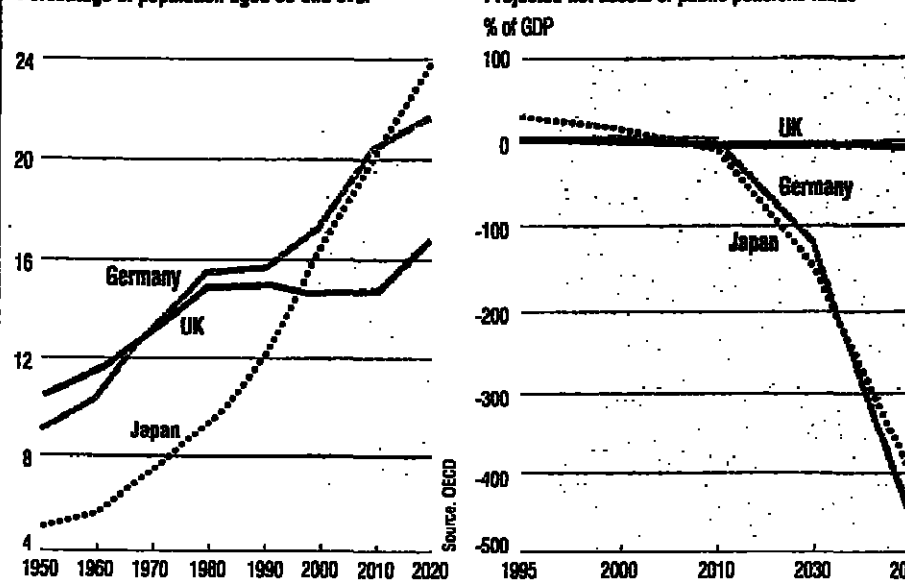
52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Code
High Low Stock							
30.48	30.48	29.48	30.48	30.48	0.00	0.00	3

JOHN
WILLCOCK



But this disagreement over policy reveals a deep divide not just in policy prescription, but a conceptual divide over how the Japanese economy works. Both sides agree that Japan is in a bind; but they completely disagree on the appropriate tightness or otherwise of fiscal policy in this situation.


The problem is further compounded by the fiscal position. Japan already has the highest running deficit of any G7 country, and faces an even greater



So what will happen? One crunch comes next month, when there will be a tidying-up of bank accounts prior to the end of the financial year. The authorities have given an *absolute, categorical statement* of support of the banks: whatever happens, depositors,

So they cut taxes; the response by Japanese consumers will be to save the additional money, not spend it. Instead, what is needed is a combination of banking reconstruction and other structural reforms.

What Japan needs is something much more like a Thatcher revolution, not yet another minor fiscal boost.



ed in 1985 and awarded the CBE. His first big job was at Mobil Oil, where he was a director from 1963 to 1969. Since then he has been a director of Joseph Lucas, general manager of Lucas Aerospace, and head of Defence Sales at the Ministry of Defence. He has also been group managing director of Plessey, and served as chairman of the prime minister's advisory panel on the Citizen's Charter. He lists his interests as collecting tennis paintings and theatre

to ensure that members of the public and their advisors have full confidence in the fairness and impartiality of the new independent review system for the Land Registry."

Mind you, if there are re-criminations over the failed merger, at least Mr Land's got a trade to go to.

FE	Stone	CBOT	Cents/bshl	CBOT	Cents/bshl
98	80,65	Mar/98	27,25	Mar/98	28,00
98	82,60	May/98	29,00	May/98	28,50
98	84,60	Jul/98	28,00	Jul/98	32,40
:	281	Vol:	54833	Vol:	135

at 5:30pm

FE	Stone	CBOT	Cents/bshl	CBOT	Cents/bshl
98	82,33	Mar	White Melzo (SAF)	\$/100 mt	91,000
98	84,80	Feb	Rubber (TCM)	1/ 5k kg	87,20
98	85,43	Mar	Cotton (CTN)	\$/50k lb	68,24
98	85,33	Mar	Crude Palm (KLG)	\$/25 in	237,000
98	85,20	Mar	Soya Oil (CBT)	\$/80k lb	28,54
98	85,55	Feb	Woolen Yarn (TGM)	\$/500kg	126,000

Fund	Bsf	Bay	Vst
Corporate Income	20483	(NA)	000
Deutschebank Res	10042	(NA)	000
European	10042	(NA)	000
Fixed Income	9185	(NA)	000
Global Bond	9207	(NA)	000
Investment	10042	(NA)	000
Masterfund/Bsf/Fund	10042	(NA)	000
Mutual	9185	(NA)	000
Stairing Res	10179	(NA)	000
Ts & L	10042	(NA)	000
UK Emerg Leasdes	10138	(NA)	000
UK Equity Income	10300	(NA)	000
US Govt	24029	(NA)	000
Singer & Friedlander Unit Mgrs Ltd			
Global Growth	9635	9770	070X
Global Income	9635	9770	100X
Global Income/Emerg	9635	9770	100X
Luggens	9250	7125	180X
Managed Ext	9186	9920	220X
Smaller Cos	9250	9840	000X
Standard Life Unit Trust	29220	9820	000X
TS London Ind. Edinburgh 5480			
UK 1000 35 15			
GlobalAdvntgs	5452	5480	000X
GlobalAdvntgs/Sec	5710	6940	039
Advntgs/Sec	5710	5714	34
Income/Advntgs	4735	4780	34
Income/Advntgs/Sec	5452	5480	000X
Primer Income	5448	5506	39
Primer Inc Advntgs	5448	5506	39
Income/Advntgs/Sec	5190	5230	075
UK Income/Advntgs	5575	5934	320
UK Income/Advntgs/Sec	778	81	39
Virgin Direct			
TS 1000 65 95			
Small Income/Advntgs-direct.com			
Pst Growth Acc	10671	10671	0
Pst Growth Acc	10671	10671	0
PFS Income	1408	1408	0
PFS Underfunding	17502	17502	177

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 of the most recent manager reports and
 perform profiles are made from fund managers free
 on request.
 A more extensive list of unit trusts and managed funds
 is posted on WebMoney and Strategic Funds.

Country	Year	Population (millions)	Urban population (millions)	Urban population (%)
Algeria	1990	10.0	4.0	40.0
Algeria	2000	11.0	5.0	45.5
Algeria	2010	12.0	6.0	50.0
Algeria	2020	13.0	7.0	53.8
Algeria	2030	14.0	8.0	57.1
Algeria	2040	15.0	9.0	60.0
Algeria	2050	16.0	10.0	62.5
Algeria	2060	17.0	11.0	64.7
Algeria	2070	18.0	12.0	66.7
Algeria	2080	19.0	13.0	68.4
Algeria	2090	20.0	14.0	70.0
Algeria	2100	21.0	15.0	71.4
Algeria	2110	22.0	16.0	72.7
Algeria	2120	23.0	17.0	73.9
Algeria	2130	24.0	18.0	75.0
Algeria	2140	25.0	19.0	76.0
Algeria	2150	26.0	20.0	76.9
Algeria	2160	27.0	21.0	77.8
Algeria	2170	28.0	22.0	78.6
Algeria	2180	29.0	23.0	79.3
Algeria	2190	30.0	24.0	80.0
Algeria	2200	31.0	25.0	80.6
Algeria	2210	32.0	26.0	81.3
Algeria	2220	33.0	27.0	81.8
Algeria	2230	34.0	28.0	82.4
Algeria	2240	35.0	29.0	82.9
Algeria	2250	36.0	30.0	83.3
Algeria	2260	37.0	31.0	83.8
Algeria	2270	38.0	32.0	84.2
Algeria	2280	39.0	33.0	84.6
Algeria	2290	40.0	34.0	85.0
Algeria	2300	41.0	35.0	85.4
Algeria	2310	42.0	36.0	85.7
Algeria	2320	43.0	37.0	86.0
Algeria	2330	44.0	38.0	86.4
Algeria	2340	45.0	39.0	86.7
Algeria	2350	46.0	40.0	87.0
Algeria	2360	47.0	41.0	87.2
Algeria	2370	48.0	42.0	87.5
Algeria	2380	49.0	43.0	87.8
Algeria	2390	50.0	44.0	88.0
Algeria	2400	51.0	45.0	88.2
Algeria	2410	52.0	46.0	88.5
Algeria	2420	53.0	47.0	88.7
Algeria	2430	54.0	48.0	88.9
Algeria	2440	55.0	49.0	89.1
Algeria	2450	56.0	50.0	89.3
Algeria	2460	57.0	51.0	89.5
Algeria	2470	58.0	52.0	89.7
Algeria	2480	59.0	53.0	89.8
Algeria	2490	60.0	54.0	90.0
Algeria	2500	61.0	55.0	90.2
Algeria	2510	62.0	56.0	90.3
Algeria	2520	63.0	57.0	90.5
Algeria	2530	64.0	58.0	90.6
Algeria	2540	65.0	59.0	90.8
Algeria	2550	66.0	60.0	90.9
Algeria	2560	67.0	61.0	91.0
Algeria	2570	68.0	62.0	91.2
Algeria	2580	69.0	63.0	91.3
Algeria	2590	70.0	64.0	91.4
Algeria	2600	71.0	65.0	91.6
Algeria	2610	72.0	66.0	91.7
Algeria	2620	73.0	67.0	91.9
Algeria	2630	74.0	68.0	92.0
Algeria	2640	75.0	69.0	92.1
Algeria	2650	76.0	70.0	92.2
Algeria	2660	77.0	71.0	92.3
Algeria	2670	78.0	72.0	92.4
Algeria	2680	79.0	73.0	92.5
Algeria	2690	80.0	74.0	92.6
Algeria	2700	81.0	75.0	92.7

CLASS	DATE	TIME	BY
1001	10/10/10	10:00	1001

A more extensive list of unit lists and managed funds is published on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

Howley perfection to move Welsh up the pecking order



A scrum-half in the mould of the greats leads the principality against England on Saturday. Chris Hewett assesses Wales' No 1 dragon

THEY used to call him Stan, as in Stan Laurel, but not even the meanness of international back-row forwards finds much to laugh at in Rob Howley these days. The new nickname, Peter Perfect, has a much more appropriate ring to it: perfect as in impeccable, precise, polished, complete. As in too damned good to be true.

The dewy-eyed romantic who throng the terraces of the principality from Stradey in the west to Rodney Parade in the east still wax lyrical about a hidden outside-half factory tucked away deep in the valleys, and the emergence of Arwel Thomas as a stand-off in the grand tradition suggests the stardust machinery is back in full production. But what about the scrum-half factory? Gareth Edwards, Chico Hopkins, Brynmor Williams, Terry Holmes, Robert Jones? It is a sporting lineage of noble breeding, a pedigree unmatched anywhere in the rugby world.

And now the success-starved boys have Howley as their No 1 Dragon. It took the Welsh selectors five long years to see where the lean and muscular maestro from Bridgend was coming from, but once they installed the cerebral Kevin Bowring as national coach, the pieces began to fall into place.

Howley made his debut against England at Twickenham two years ago, scoring a fine try that went at least some way towards easing the frustra-

tion of a narrow defeat. No one will die of shock if he manages another at the same venue on Saturday.

On that late winter's day in 1996, Howley was the last Welshman out of the changing room door ("Embarrassingly enough, I lost a stud from my boot as I walked down the tunnel and my team-mates had to wait there until I'd fixed it"). This weekend, he will be the first to take the field, thanks to Bowring's decision to saddle his playmaker-in-chief with the added responsibility of captaincy. An unwanted burden? A poisoned chalice? Not according to the new skipper.

"The captaincy is not just about me, is it? Leadership has little to do with one bloke shouting the odds and everything to do with all 15 players taking responsibility for their actions. Rugby has moved too far and too quickly for one person to take all the decisions that matter during the course of 80 minutes. We're working towards playing decision-makers in every position and the more of them I have around me, the easier the job becomes."

"We're very big on self-analysis in this team and that's the way I like it. We simply have to be critical of ourselves, to look honestly at our contributions in every phase of every match. People say we're a developing team, but the way I look at things, it's about time we stopped developing and started to deliver. You can't keep excusing your defeats for ever and a day."

For all that, Howley has found a degree of solace in two recent reverses. The Welsh performance in Paris last season was, in his view, the best at the Parc des Princes since Graham Price's *amus mirabilis* in 1975. Likewise, the 40-point lesson meted out by Justin Marshall's All Blacks in November was not, he claims, quite the shaming it appeared.

"I'm the first to accept that the result against New Zealand was disappointing in the extreme, but when you look at the game in its entirety, it's clear that we were more closely matched than the final scoreline made out. I'm not saying we would have won had the bounce of the ball gone our way occasionally - of course they were the more complete side - but 37-21 to them wouldn't have been an unfair reflection."

"Wales can be a top-six rugby nation. I've no doubt about that. Indeed, it's vital that we establish ourselves among the elite and do it quickly, because we're hosting a World Cup in 18 months' time. The hosts need to be contenders, not also-rans."

"How do we go about it? We start by beating Scotland and Ireland every time we play them, home and away. And we also start by moving that big English pack around the field, imposing our style of play on them for a change and presenting our backs with the sort of quality ball that allows them to give it a lash."

"We all know the English have had their problems up



Rob Howley: It's about time Wales stopped developing and started to deliver

Photograph: AP

front, but I'm still of the opinion that whatever danger they bring to a match is to be found in their pack."

"Only eight months ago I was on a Lions tour with the Martin Johnsons, the Lawrence Dallagies, the Richard Hills. These are big-ocean players who have shown the ability to dominate at the very highest level. They're awesome, to be honest. Stop them and you stop England. Their forward performance will be the key this weekend."

Class half-backs are rarer than radium at the moment, hence the clamour and cheque-book-wielding kerfuffle over Thomas Castaignède's match-winning performance for France against England in the first round of Five Nations matches 11 days ago. A similarly accomplished contribution from Howley on Saturday will add a fistful of noughts to his value, too, especially as a number of leading English clubs are already on his trail.

Howley has no urgent desire to leave Cardiff, however. "I've got another two years to run at the Arms Park. I'm with the Welsh Rugby Union up to and including the World Cup and as I'm the sort of person who is happy to honour any contract with my thumb print on it, I'm giving all the speculation a wide berth," he said.

"If Cardiff either wanted or needed to sell me, I suppose I'd take an interest in what might happen. But I've got enough to

think about just at the moment, thanks. It's England on Saturday, you know."

Everyone in Wales knows, actually, and they can barely wait. For the first time in a decade, the great sentimentalists of world rugby are basing their predictions of victory over the English on something more substantial than nostalgic whimsy. Rob Howley is one of the reasons why. The stage is set for Peter Perfect's perfect performance.

French still have Leonard on their mind

By Chris Hewett

JASON LEONARD looks a stone-cold certainty to win his 61st cap against Wales this weekend, despite the fact that the French are still on his disciplinary case. The Tricolores were adamant yesterday that footage of Leonard tramping on Thomas Llewellyn, the Perpignan No 8, was in the mail. However, the alleged evidence was fast taking on the mythical proportions of Billy Bunter's postal order.

England were due to name their side this morning and Clive Woodward, the national coach, insisted he had yet to identify anything on the tape of the Five Nations opener in Paris 11 days ago to justify his taking action against Leonard. The French have accused the 29-year-old Hadenquin of breaking Llewellyn's ribs with a deliberate stamp, but Woodward commented yesterday: "I cannot see the problem."

"I would take action if necessary. I took steps when Martin Johnson was shown to have thrown a punch in the All Blacks game before Christmas. But I am not in favour of citing for things in the heat of battle."

If Woodward was concerned about the state of anyone's ribcage, it belonged to Lawrence Dallaglio. The England captain admitted yesterday that his popped rib cartilage was still causing discomfort and confirmed that he would not contemplate facing the Welsh unless declared 100 per cent fit.

But he added: "What makes me sore is the fact that I've been written off by critics, who seem to know more about my current state and chances of recovery than I do. My injury is improving daily and if that continues, I will take a full part in training towards the end of the week and then play against Wales."

The Welsh were fretting over Arwel Thomas, their outside-half from Swansea. Thomas bruised his right knee at the weekend against Llanelli and said: "It's tough and go. Everything depends on how long the management are prepared to give me."

PHILIPS



Today we publish the updated results of The Independent Fantasy Football League. The league table includes all scores up to 7 February. Due to a technical problem, the player scores do not include this weekend's results. Updated scores will be published this Sunday. Neither set of scores includes results from the FA Cup. The manager who is the overall winner will win a trip to the World Cup finals in France next Summer.

Every time one of your players score you get four points. There are four points for a keeper or a defender every time their team keeps a clean sheet. If a player scores the winning goal, i.e. if there is a one goal difference in the scoreline, the player scoring the final goal for the winning team is awarded 1 bonus point awarded in addition to standard goal related points. Each successful Assist, a pass judged by our experts to lead directly to a goal, will give a player 3 points. The opinion of our experts on the matter is final. Each player selected and starting a game will be awarded one point.

If a player is given a yellow Card they lose 1 point. If a player is given a Red Card they lose 3 points. Own goals, either scored or conceded, do not count.

The Premiership Manager that you choose will be awarded 3 points if their real-life team wins, 1 point is awarded if they draw and no points are given if they lose.

Updated player scores and league tables will be published every Tuesday in The Independent and repeated the following Sunday in The Independent on Sunday.

HOW TO SCORE	
player scores	4 points
clean sheet	4 points
winning goal	1 point
successful assist	3 points
1 yellow card	-1 point
red card	-3 points
manager's team wins	3 points
draw	1 point
loss	0 points

Independent Fantasy Football

OVERALL SCORE CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 8 AUGUST - 16 FEBRUARY

LEAGUE TABLE			
CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 8 AUGUST - 8 FEBRUARY			
POS	NAME	TEAM	POINTS
1	Mr D Srai	The Untouchables	826
1	Mr D Aston	Billy Boys 2nd 11	826
3	Mr C King	Feeling Victory	823
3	Mr P Tuffier	Pins Up 4	823
3	Mr D Baker	Deja Vu	823
3	Mr D Evans	Boothend End Olds Boys	823
3	Mr J Cox	Southville FC	823
3	Mr D Edmington	Edmo United	823
9	Mr B Srai	Simply The Best	822
10	Mr Archer	No Wright	820
11	Mr J Boyle	Wembley Rovers	816
11	Mr A Wingrove	Thor's Boys	816
11	Mr T Lyons	Diana's Demons	816
14	Miss L Wild	Ameretto AFC	812
14	Mr S Scott	Unbeatable	812
16	Mr J McCrossan	Washed Up Army	806
17	Mr D Baker	Dead Heat	800
17	Mr J Hayes	Early Birds	800
19	Mr M Pawley	Robert's Raiders	798
19	Mr D Ackroyd	Jack's Lads	798
21	Mr S Scott	The Dream Team	797
22	Mr I Brown	The Hoofers	796
22	Mr A Choudi	Nikes 9th 11	796
22	Mr M Ewins	Lincoln Rovers	796
25	Mr S Ford	Danville United	792
25	Mr S Walker	Retro Rovers	792
25	Mr J Cox	Stunning Stunts	791
28	Mr G Bell	Look Lively	791
30	Mr M Ewins	I've Started But Will I Finish	790
30	Mr M Ewins	Mikes A Team	790
30	Mr A Mitchell	The Eye For It	790
30	Mr D Aston	Billy Boys 3rd 11	790
30	Mr C Thomas	Scunthorpe Extras	790
35	Mr J McCrossan	Washed Up Army	786
35	Mr K Boyle	Clogston Rovers	786
35	Mr P Davis	Team A 40	786
35	Mr T Brazier	Wow For Short	784
35	Mr P Davis	Dugs FC	784
39	Mr G Bell	The Hairy Monsters	783
39	Mr P Tuffier	Pins Up 2	783

CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	WL	OF	VALUE	PTS
GOALKEEPERS						
301	Sciano	ARS	0	0	4.0	0
302	Lisak	ARS	0	0	1.0	0
303	Manning	ARS	0	0	1.0	0
304	Bosch	ARS	0	0	1.0	0
305	Olsen	AV	0	0	1.5	0
306	Watson	BAR	1	33	1.0	0
307	Sease	BAR	1	32	1.0	0
308	Flowers	BLA	1	32	1.0	0
309	Filan	BLA	1	32	1.0	0
310	De Goey	BLA	1	32	1.0	0
311	Groves	CHE	0	0	1.0	0
312	Ogilvie	COV	0	0	1.0	0
313	Hedman	COV	0	16	1.0	0
314	Nash	CRY	0	0	1.0	0
315	Poon	CRY	0	0	1.0	0
316	Houli	DER	1	38	1.0	0
317	Houli	DER	1	38	1.0	0
318	Gerrard	DER	0	4	1.5	0
319	Martin	LEE	0	36	1.5	0
320	Keller	LEE	0	36	1.5	0
321	James	LIV	0	0	1.0	0
322	Warner	LIV	0	0	1.0	0
323	Schmeichel	MAN	1	71	2.5	0
324	Van Der Gouw	MAN	0	0	1.0	0
325	Glen	NEW	1	27	2.5	0
326	Holmes	NEW	1	27	2.5	0
327	Pratt	SHEF	1	43	3.0	0
328	Dyer	SOU	0	0	1.0	0
329	Beckham	SOU	0	0	1.0	0
330	Walton	TOT	0	45	3.0	0
331	Milkins	TOT	0	12	1.0	0
332	Sullivan	WIM	0	30	2.7	0
DEFENDERS						
400	Dixon	ARS	4	0	2.5	0
401	Upson	ARS	0	1	2.0	0
402	Pett	ARS	0	0	4.2	0
403	Waters	ARS	0	0	2.5	0
404	Waters	ARS	0	0	2.5	0
405	Boyd	ARS	0	0	4.5	0
406	Adams	ARS	0	0	4.5	0
407	Ball	ARS	0	0	4.5	0
408	Adams	ARS	0	0	4.5	0
409	Kearns	ARS	0	12	4.5	0
410	Stanton	ARS	0	0	3.2	0
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Turf's war intensifies in Court 13

COURT 13 at the Royal Courts of Justice does not look as you expect - but then, since the only pictures coming out of racing's libel trial of the century are hand-drawn "artist's impressions", which could easily be a nine-year-old's scribble, it is hard to know what to expect. For 11 days now, this has been the scene of a spirited libel action brought by the trainer, Lynda Ramsden, her husband, Jack, and Kieren Fallon, the champion jockey, against *The Sporting Life*, and the case seems sure to continue for a few days yet.

The plaintiffs claim that they were libelled in a leading article in the *Life* in May 1995, after the easy success of Top Cees, trained by Lynda Ramsden and ridden by Fallon, in the Chester Cup. They believe that the article accused them of "cheating". The Mirror Group, publishers of *The Sporting Life*, denies libel and maintains that the article was true in substance or fact, and fair comment on a matter of public interest.

The proceedings have not made the impact in the nation-

al news pages of such recent libel action as those involving Ian Botham and Imran Khan, or Gillian Triggs and the libel, but in the racing press, any talk of such trifling matters as the imminent Cheltenham Festival or the first Classics of the Flat season has been firmly relegated by the latest reports from The Strand.

All three of the plaintiffs have already taken the stand, and refuted allegations concerning the running and riding of Top Cees in the Swaffham Handicap at Newmarket three weeks before the Chester Cup. Top Cees finished fifth at Newmarket, but won the Chester Cup by eight lengths. Other witnesses have included Russ Gar-

Costs are mounting amid the cut and thrust of a key libel trial. Greg Wood reports

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Macgeorge
(Leicester 3.50)
NB: Global Legend
(Sedgefield 4.30)

Yesterday the proceedings took something of a pull before the appearance, expected today, of Tom Clarke, the editor of *The Sporting Life*, but even so, the cut and thrust in Court 13 was

surely the best free show in town. Free, that is, for the public, but not for those involved, who are watching two of the most expensive QCs in the business, Richard Hartley and Patrick Milmo, plus their teams, accumulate charges at what is estimated to be a grand total of almost £50,000 a day.

Giving evidence yesterday was Alan Amies, the senior race-reader with *Raceform*, publishers of the official form book, for more than 30 years. It is his job to analyse the running of every horse in a race, and the cross-examination by Milmo, representing the plaintiffs, on his opinion of Top Cees' performance in both the Swaffham Handicap and Chester Cup. Amies had reported that in the Swaffham, Top Cees was "never placed to challenge," and he said that this was a phrase he used to indicate that a horse had not been trying.

Milmo offered Amies other examples of horses whose performances he had described in the same way, including one which had been ridden by Lanfranco Dettori, and another which was ridden by John Reid and trained by Mark Johnston.

"Sometimes stables have what I'd call sympathetic runners," Amies said.

Milmo also invited him to

compare the finish of the Swaffham Handicap to the closing stages of the Cesarewitch later the same season, in which Top Cees finished third. Earlier witnesses had given evidence that a gap appeared between other runners in the Swaffham Handicap which Fallon seemed slow to exploit. In the Cesarewitch, Milmo said, it had taken Top Cees a similar amount of time to get going. Amies, however, replied that "in the Cesarewitch, the other horses were staying on. In the other race, they were going up and down on the spot."

It was a tussle which proceeded in tiny footsteps, a inch gained here but then given there, and battle will be joined again this morning, with evidence from Clarke. Derek Thompson, from Channel 4 Racing, is also rumoured to be taking the stand at some stage this week, while Alistair Down, the *Life's* deputy editor and the author of the disputed article, will also be called before the respective QCs exchange their closing addresses. A verdict is anticipated within the next seven days.

Michael Foy, yesterday cleared the Irishman for his Leicester return after examining the radius bone Maguire broke in his right hand following a fall from the David Nicholson-trained Hurricane Lamp at Kempton's Christmas meeting.

The jockey's consultant, Dr

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Racing's futures market

By Ian Davies

AFTER his victory in the Game Spirit Chase at Newbury on Saturday, Ask Tom is a top-priced 3-1 with Coral and William Hill for the Queen Mother Champion Chase but will surely tackle the Arkle, for which he now holds a favourite's chance.

The Tote Gold Trophy winner Sharpie is 25-1 with William Hill for the Champion Hurdle, while the three-length Gold Trophy runner up, Kerawi, who was conceding 11lb, is 20-1 with William Hill and the Tote.

Each-way a quarter the odds, places, 1, 2, 3 (Cheltenham, Tuesday, 17 March)

Horse (Trainer)	Cost	William Hill	Ladbrokes	Total
Champion Hurdle (2m 110yds)				
Ask Tom (P. Nicholls)	3-1	3-1	3-1	3-1
Sharpie (P. Nicholls)	25-1	25-1	25-1	25-1
Kerawi (P. Nicholls)	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Arkle (P. Nicholls)	2-1	2-1	2-1	2-1
Queen Mother Champion Chase (2m)				
Ask Tom (P. Nicholls)	3-1	3-1	3-1	3-1
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Each-way a quarter the odds, places, 1, 2, 3 (Cheltenham, Tuesday, 17 March)

Leicester

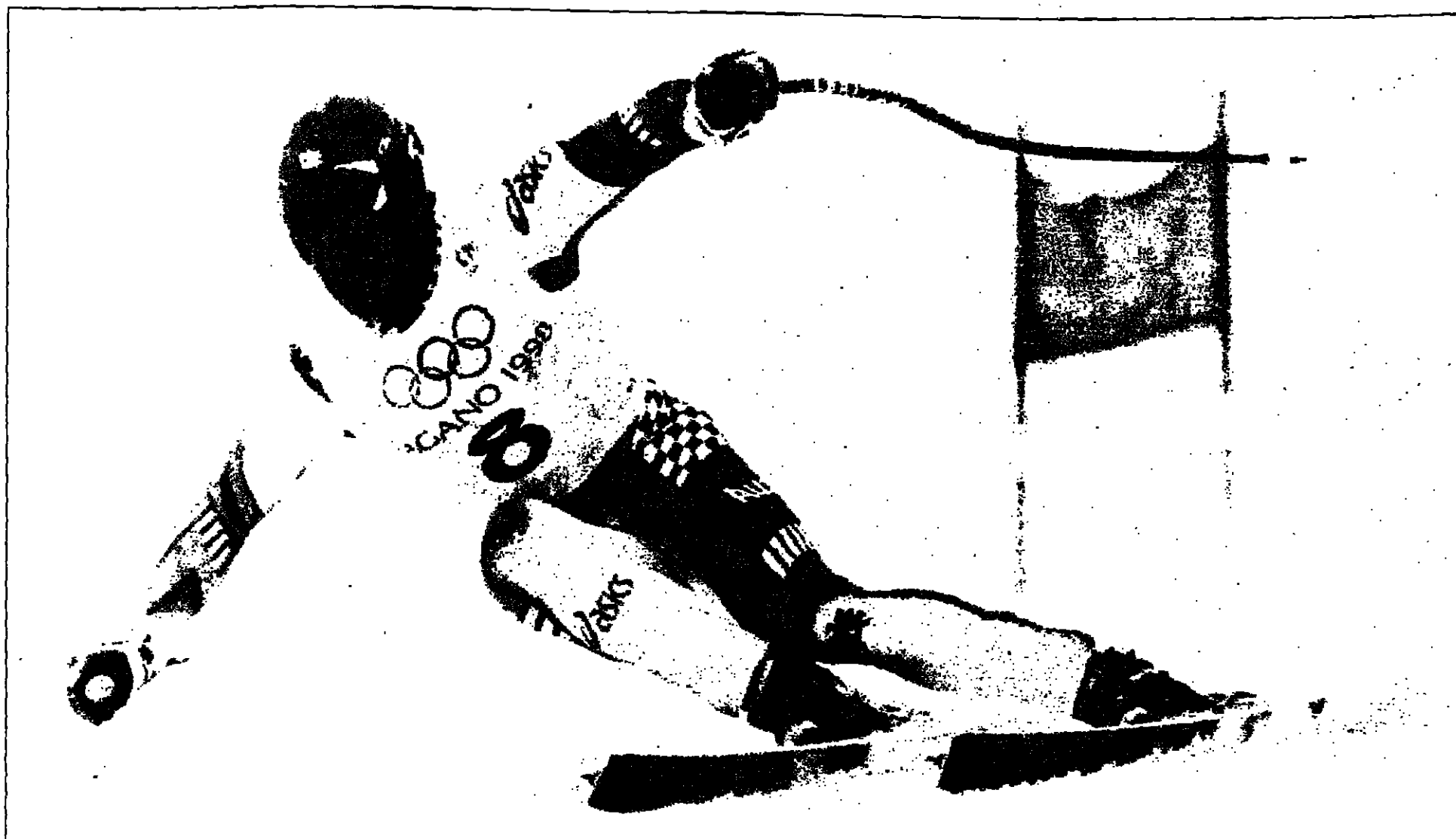
2.20 Colonel Blazer (nb)
2.50 Totallity Yours
3.20 The Moor

GOING: Hurdles course - Good to Soft (Soft in places); Chase course - Good to Firm (Good in places).

Right-hand, undulating course, with stiff fences.
Racecourse is 2 miles south-east of city off A6, Leicester railway station (London, St Pancras - Sheffield line) over 2 miles away. ADVERTISEMENTS: Club £20, Tattersalls £10 (JAPs £5). Public car park £25 admits car and four occupants. Free parking. CAR PARKING: LEADING TRAINERS (5-YEAR RECORD): M. Pipe 16 winners from 73 runners (26%).
LEADING JOCKEYS (5-YEAR RECORD): A. P. McCoy 14 winners from 49 rides (28%). A. P. McCoy 11-32 (21%), W. Morrison 11-32 (21%), C. Llewellyn 11-32 (21%).
FAVOURITES: 83 wins from 269 rides (30%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Silverman 2 (50%).

2.20 WREN HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,500 added 2m 4f 110yds Penalty Value £3,379

1-144 COLONEL BLAZER (nb) (T. W. Morrison) 11-32 (21%) 11-32 (21%) 11-32 (21%) 11-32 (21%)
2-1354 GALEO BLUE (nb) (C. P. Murphy) 11-32 (21%) 11-32 (21%) 11-32 (21%) 11-32 (21%)
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Comeback king: Hermann Maier put his fall in the downhill behind him to power to victory in the super-G on Mount Karamatsudate yesterday

Photograph: AP

Fall and rise of the Herminator

THE MOST dramatic story of the 18th Winter Olympics was played out on the slopes of Mount Karamatsudate yesterday – the fall and rise of Hermann Maier.

Three days after his fearful tumble in the men's downhill, the Austrian whose awesome size and power have earned him the nickname of Monster, or the Herminator, returned to win the Olympic gold medal which so many people had forecast for him before these Games.

His time of 1min 34.82sec in the super Giant slalom left him more than half a second ahead of his nearest challenger, Didier Cuche of Switzerland, with his Austrian team-mate, Hans Knauss, taking the bronze in the same time.

Considering the circumstances of his crash, it was extraordinary that the 26-year-old former bricklayer was still walking and talking, never mind skiing. Just 17 seconds into the downhill course, he had taken off at the turn which caused problems to a succession of the competitors and smashed through two safety nets before coming to rest, prostrate on his front, 125 metres further on.

If you believed in portents, they were not good. The race

was on Friday 13th, and Maier was skiing fourth – a number which represents death in Japanese culture.

The Herminator, however, was unharmed.

Despite sustaining shoulder and knee injuries which caused him to miss the following day's slalom competition, the man who has dominated this season's World Cup competition returned yesterday to awesome effect.

Since breaking into the Austrian team two years ago, Maier has established the reputation of a man who takes fearful risks, a racer best viewed through half-open fingers. But even he approached this first

Mike Rowbottom reports on the risks that paid off for a bricklayer with attitude

race back with an element of caution.

"It was a problem for me mentally," he said. "I needed to come through the first gate to overcome the barrier of being in competition again. I wasn't scared to go out there again, but I was anxious. The crash is something which keeps going over and over in my head – even more so now I have won the gold. I do not know how I escaped from it to be able to race again. It was the worst accident I have ever had. I walked away from it because the next com-

petitor had to come down, but the doctors spent all day treating me."

But while he was able to face up to a 650-metre descent through 35 gates, the idea of watching his own video nasty – something that has been replayed worldwide – scares him to death.

"I've not watched it on TV because I can't," he said. "If I do see it, it won't be before the end of the World Cup season – and even then I'm not sure."

Yesterday's race will make far easier viewing for him. "It

wasn't a perfect race, and I wasn't in perfect form," he said. "It was important to me to ski again after the accident but I could not be a fool."

Predicted or not, to win a gold here was a stupendous achievement for a man who only forced his way back into the Austrian team in 1996 after being dropped by the national skiing programme at the age of 15 following a knee injury.

Since he gave up his trade – "I laid my last brick on October 26, 1995 at 3pm," he said with a grin – and took up his passion, he has made himself both rich and famous.

But there was lingering resentment over the circum-

stances of his crash, which occurred at a point where the International Ski Federation officials had made an alteration to the course.

"I know I made mistakes in the downhill, but unlike other skiers I had not received any information about the gate which had been moved or the tailwind which had such an effect. And I would like to know why I was not told. There should have been a practice run before the event – then I and others would not have been troubled at that point. The only way I could have taken that turn was in a tank."

Seizing their chance to get up to date with the alpine skiing programme, the organisers made the most of the good weather by running the women's downhill and the downhill section of the women's combined, which will conclude today. Both were won by Germany's Katja Seizinger, who became the first woman to retain an Olympic alpine skiing title.

"It was a really good day for me," Seizinger said. "I really like these conditions." Not bad going for someone who said before the Games that the state of the alpine slopes meant that every event would be "a lottery". If that was so, she drew two lucky tickets.

Roy shines as Canada polish off old enemy

Mike Rowbottom reports from Nagano

RON WILSON, coach of the United States ice hockey team, said before these Games that a goaltender could make all the difference in this competition.

On the evidence of yesterday's tumultuous clash between the United States and Canada at the Big Hat rink, Wilson was spot on. And that goaltender is Patrick Roy of Canada.

The man whom many believe is the best in the business faced 31 shots from the best players the United States could muster from the National Hockey League, and saved 30 of them. Four goals from 25 shots took Canada into the quarter-final knock-out stage, starting tomorrow, in pole position.

For the US team, which lost its opening match 3-2 to Sweden, a second defeat was not disastrous – results merely influence the quarter-final draw with all teams qualifying – but in terms of morale, and national pride, the hurt was hard to hide.

If you had to think of Roy in terms of British goalkeepers, your first thought would be Neville Southall. The French-

Canadian has the same shambolic look and unlikely athleticism. But his reaction when the Americans pulled a goal back with just six minutes remaining was pure Peter Shilton – he took it as a personal insult.

Canada have three top-class keepers, and Roy did not make the team two years ago when they reached the inaugural World Cup final and lost to the United States, but his performances since he arrived here with the NHL brigade last week have established him as one of the Games' outstanding figures.

His piece of resistance yesterday came in the first period, when the United States had a 5-3 advantage for two minutes while Joe Sakic and Rob Zamuner sat in the sin bin for, respectively, slashing and holding. It turned out to be two minutes of target practice for the United States as they fired in seven consecutive shots on goal. Two hit the posts. Roy, blocking and diving, dealt with the rest.

The psychological damage to the US was already enormous when the penalty period ended, and then the two released prisoners immediately combined with the legendary Wayne Gretzky to give Canada the lead.

Sakic's pass appeared to have put Gretzky in with a

shooting opportunity, but The Great One turned possibility into certainty by switching the ball gently to Zamuner for an easy score. It was a sweet cameo from the 37-year-old, who has more points for assists in the NHL than his nearest challenger has in combined points for goals and assists.

He had emphasised his commitment to the cause in the opening 10 minutes, when he was given a two-minute penalty for tripping. Gretzky in the sin-bin. As one observer remarked, it was like seeing Bobby Charlton sent off.

As the Americans' frustration grew, they resorted increasingly to the bodycheck and cross-check. For a few moments in the second period, they seemed intent on re-shaping the arena using Canadian bodies to hammer out the boards. But the Canadians, with their huge, baby-face killer captain Eric Lindros, were well able to look after themselves. Throughout Roy, eyes burning through his mask in their intensity, kept up a constant, head-bobbing monologue in his efforts to maintain concentration.

"What," someone asked, "are you saying to yourself out there?" "Nothing really special," replied Roy, who speaks both English and French.

"What language was it in, then?"

"Today," Roy said, "maybe Japanese."

The two defeats have spelled out, almost jolts to American national pride in any language and the US face a tougher quarter-final match as a result.

"We know that the road to a gold medal probably runs through Canada," Wilson said. On yesterday's evidence, that road is a dead end.

The two nations meet again today, in the gold medal decider in the women's competition, and the portents for a good, clean sporting game are not good.

After their group match, where the Canadian world champions were beaten by the United States, there were accusations that some of the US players had goaded Canada's forward Danielle Goyette, who scored the first-ever Olympic goal for her country last week, over the recent death of her father.

The Canadian coach, Shannon Miller, is reportedly threatening to make the Americans pay for their behaviour.

Winter Olympics results and timetable

ALPINE SKIING

Men's super-G
1 Hermann Maier (Austria) 1:34.82
2 Didier Cuche (Switzerland) 1:35.43
3 Hans Knauss (Austria) 1:35.43
4 A. Follin (Italy) 1:35.51; 5 K. Aernoudt (Netherlands) 1:35.57; 6 P. Jaubert (France) 1:35.72; 7 D. Rattner (USA) 1:35.96; 8 T. Moss (USA) 1:35.97; 9 L. Kjus (Norway) 1:36.25; 10 F. Nyberg (Sweden) 1:36.31
Brisht: 31 G. Bol 1:38.00; 32 A. Frenschner 1:38.08
Women's downhill
1 Katja Seizinger (Germany) 1:29.09
2 Pernilla Wiberg (Sweden) 1:29.18
3 Rosalind Wiseman (USA) 1:29.37
4 M. Suchet (France) 1:29.48; 5 S. Gladstone (Russia) 1:29.50; 6 P. Stuetz (USA) 1:29.54; 7 R. Campagnard (France) 1:29.72; 8 A. Memminger (Austria) 1:29.84; 9 K. Gutwirth (Germany) 1:29.96
Women's combined downhill (slalom today)
1 K. Seizinger (Germany) 1:29.25; 2 P. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:29.36; 3 R. Gladstone (Russia) 1:29.34; 4 M. Suchet (France) 1:29.37; 5 S. Gladstone (Russia) 1:29.37; 6 P. Stuetz (USA) 1:29.37; 7 H. Gerg (Austria) 1:29.38; 8 S. Schuster (Austria) 1:29.40; 9 L. Kjus (Norway) 1:29.42; 10 P. Follin (Italy) 1:29.54

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

Women's 4x5km relay
1 Russia (Svetlana Savitskaya, Larisa Lazutina, Elena Vassilova, Olga Danilova) 56:58.0
2 Norway 58:58.0
3 Germany 59:58.0
4 Sweden 59:58.0
5 Italy 59:58.0
6 Switzerland 59:58.0
7 Austria 59:58.0
8 Czech Republic 59:58.0
9 Finland 59:58.0
10 Sweden 59:58.0
11 A. Vassilova (Russia) 59:58.0
12 S. Savitskaya (Russia) 59:58.0
Men's 4x10km relay
1 Russia (Sergei Novitskiy, Alexander Zhigalov, Alexander Zhigalov, Alexander Zhigalov) 1:58:00
2 Norway 1:58:00
3 Germany 1:58:00
4 Sweden 1:58:00
5 Italy 1:58:00
6 Switzerland 1:58:00
7 Austria 1:58:00
8 Czech Republic 1:58:00
9 Finland 1:58:00
10 Sweden 1:58:00
11 A. Vassilova (Russia) 1:58:00
12 S. Savitskaya (Russia) 1:58:00

ICE HOCKEY

Men's final phase: Group C: Finland 6 Kazakhstan 2; Czech Republic 1 Russia 2; Group D: Canada 4 USA 1; Sweden 5 Belarus 2
SPEED SKATING
Women's 1500m
1 Marianna Timmer (Netherlands) 4:05.96
2 P. Wiberg (Sweden) 4:05.96
3 C. Wiberg (Sweden) 4:05.96
4 E. Wiberg (Sweden) 4:05.96
5 A. Wiberg (Sweden) 4:05.96
6 S. Wiberg (Sweden) 4:05.96
7 M. Wiberg (Sweden) 4:05.96
8 L. Wiberg (Sweden) 4:05.96
9 K. Wiberg (Sweden) 4:05.96
10 P. Wiberg (Sweden) 4:05.96
11 A. Wiberg (Sweden) 4:05.96
12 S. Wiberg (Sweden) 4:05.96

FIGURE SKATING

Men's 1000m
1 P. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
2 S. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
3 M. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
4 L. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
5 K. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
6 P. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
7 A. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
8 S. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
9 M. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
10 L. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
11 K. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
12 P. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00

FIGURE SKATING

Women's 1000m
1 P. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
2 S. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
3 M. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
4 L. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
5 K. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
6 P. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
7 A. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
8 S. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
9 M. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
10 L. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
11 K. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00
12 P. Wiberg (Sweden) 1:00.00

England have worked themselves into a position where they have everything to prove



ALAN WATKINS
ON RUGBY

AS I write, the England team to play Wales has not been announced. I see it as one of the functions of a columnist to advise managers and coaches what they ought to do rather than to predict what they will do. Accordingly I can approach the subject without any greater danger than usual of looking foolish.

A consensus seems to have built up over the past week that Matt Perry must be restored in place of Mike Catt; that the front row must be remodelled to accommodate a new tight-head prop, with Victor Uboqui the favourite replacement, closely followed by Phil Vickery, and a few voices raised in favour of Will Green; and that either Tim Rodber or Tony

Diprose must come in at No 8. These are the minimum requirements. There is a case for saying that the England team who went down in Paris were, with a few adjustments such as these, the best currently available. There is equally a case for following the traditional French revolutionary policy of *a la lanterne*.

This would mean that, judged by their performances in Paris, the only players to retain their places would be David Rees, Jeremy Guscott, Paul Grayson (partly because he did not let England down with his kicking, partly because there is nobody else), Garath Archer, Lawrence Dallaglio (if fit) and Neil Back. There is certainly a

case for restoring Adedayo Adebayo and Matt Dawson to the backs and for fielding an entirely new front row, in addition to adjusting the back row.

Has anyone, by the way, noticed how hookers who are not regular first choices for their clubs are already English internationals? This season Andy Long of Bath and Dorian West of Leicester have been capped, the latter as a substitute. It can be only a matter of time before the call goes forth to George Chuter of Saracens, admittedly first choice for his club but a very recent one.

Graham Dawe, formerly of Bath, now of Moseley, was – perhaps still is – a better player than any of these. But be-

cause his period corresponded to the reign of Brian Moore he ended up with a handful of caps, four if you include a match against the United States. He must sometimes reflect on the unfairness of life.

Wales likewise have been having trouble in this department. Wisely, they have stuck consistently with David Young since his return to Cardiff from rugby league, though the wisecracks say – the front row has always been the most fertile ground for armchair authorities – that his scrummaging power has diminished since his sojourn in the north.

Well, in South Africa for the Lions last year, Young was considered better than Jason

Leonard but not quite as good as Paul Wallace. Barry Williams was distinctly unlucky not to become the first-choice hooker. For Wales the problem, as it has been for several seasons, is at loose-bead.

The selectors first flirted with Andrew Lewis of Cardiff and then transferred their affections to Christian Loader of Swansea. For the England match Lewis is back. I should have preferred an attempt to turn Lyndon Mustoe, also of Cardiff, into a regular loose-head.

But the argument I do not accept is that, at 5ft 10in and 15 stone, Lewis is "too small" for the modern game. After all, Tom Smith, of roughly similar

dimensions, discomfited the South African front row. Jeff Probyn was the same size likewise; and England could certainly use Mr Probyn's services today.

I am sorry that Craig Quinell is still omitted but delighted that Colin Charvis is back. However, he is back at No 6, rather than at No 7. And indeed people speak highly of the player who is to fill the latter position, Martyn Williams.

But the truth is surely that until flankers as a race turn themselves into left-and-right, as wings do, the blind side cannot simply be swapped for the open. They are different trades. Centres have gone the way of flankers rather than kept to

that of wings, and now usually play inside and outside, as Scott Gibbs and Allan Bateman respectively will on Saturday. They, Neil Jenkins' boot and Robert Howley present the greatest dangers to England.

With heart pounding dangerously, I shall be backing them to win at Twickenham, not because Wales have the better backs, as they do, but largely because England have worked themselves into a position where they now have everything to prove and will consequently be on edge; whereas Wales have long had nothing to lose. I shall not be at all disappointed if Jenkins and Arwel Thomas make copious use of the corner flag.

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Third Test: Openers see off West Indies' initial onslaught but Crawley's unnecessary run-out precipitates familiar sense of uncertainty

England hesitate in face of history

Rain intervenes as tourists lose momentum after Stewart heroics

Derek Pringle
reports from Port of Spain

West Indies 159 & 210
England 145 & 170-4

FOR the second time in a week, England were hesitating over beating the West Indies here at the Queen's Park Oval. Needing 225 to win they appeared to be coasting to victory after a century opening stand between Michael Atherton and Alec Stewart. However, two vital wickets by Courtney Walsh and another by Carl Hooper meant that England were 170 for 4 when heavy rain stopped play on the stroke of tea.

The West Indies have not lost a game on this ground since Pakistan beat them 21 years ago. After a morning that was all England that record began to look in jeopardy. Yet, as England are acutely aware, particularly the six current players who played in the debacle here four years ago when England were dismissed for 46 in the last innings of the match, you allow the West Indies through the front door at your peril.

The main reason this has been a low scoring match is that an awful lot of batsmen on both sides have gifted their wickets away with appalling shots and decisions. But although Atherton, Stewart and Nasser Hussain could do little over their dismissals, the same could not be said of John Crawley, whose foolish run-out brought the West Indies' waning belief flooding back with a vengeance.

Before Crawley embarked on his fatal second run England were 144 for 1. Thirteen overs later they were 168 for 4, with Ambrose and Walsh, as well as the gremlins of Port of Spain, gnawing at their heels. But if rain brought time for England to regroup, it allowed Walsh and Ambrose to rest. With the new ball due soon and the pitch

greening up under the covers, Queen's Park was certainly not a place for faint hearted batsmen.

A few hours earlier, it had all looked very different and with two days to score the 173 runs needed at the start of play, there was no need to rush. The first hour's play yielded 36 runs, most of them to Stewart. However, small totals are sometimes flattered by the cautious approach and the England team and their supporters were grateful when Stewart, after a shaky start, began to pierce the ringed field set by the West Indies captain, Brian Lara.

Stewart is at his best with pace on the ball and he began to cut loose soon after England's first scare of the morning when Atherton, scampering back for a second run, narrowly beat Nixon McLean's superb return from long leg. Next ball, with Atherton on 39, the West Indies should have broken through when he cut Walsh straight to Stuart Williams in the gully, who spilled a difficult chance.

By rights it should have been the wicket that broke the drought and the drop visibly affected the West Indies' morale. Like for England, it has been the bowlers closer to the end than the middle of their careers who have taken the majority of the wickets so far. The two back-to-back Tests here in Trinidad have taken their toll and although the spirit would have been willing after a wicketless first session, the bodies would not have been.

Resolve, even for experienced campaigners like Walsh and Ambrose, has its breaking point and instead of them perhaps reflecting on their storming performance here four years ago, their tired minds would have begun to wander back to their more recent and less savoury experiences in Karachi and Peshawar.

However, perhaps with one

last hurrah in mind after lunch, which had been brought forward by a brisk shower, Lara alternated his two senior bowlers an over at a time from the Pavilion End.

It is a pity that Lara used in Perth last winter in 100C heat while Walsh, the captain, was off the field. Whatever his reasons this time the gambit worked with Walsh finding the edge of Atherton's bat with a beauty that bounced and left the England captain off the pitch.

Before this innings, Atherton had not passed 50 in his last 12 innings. That number has now risen to 13, though his gritty 49 was worth double that in the circumstances.

With one Manchester Grammar old boy being replaced by another you would have thought that the cerebral side of chasing this target would have been in good hands.

But pressure can do strange things to the coolest of minds and with John Crawley playing for glory as well as his place in the next Test, the combination proved lethal. He was run out going for a second that was never there by Kenny Benjamin, running round from extra cover. Mind you, with TV replays angles blocked by static fielders, the decision to give Crawley out, although probably the correct one, was based on guesswork, which is what the technology is surely meant to eradicate.

While Stewart remained, however, England were still favourites. But in keeping with this incredible Test match, where the upper hand has changed sides almost by the session, the odds shifted when, eight runs later, Walsh had the England opener caught behind off a similar ball to the one that had done for his captain.

It was an incredible piece of resilience by Walsh who four balls before getting Stewart, had seen Hooper spill him at slip. To come back so soon after such a disappointment was a testament to the bowler's heart, which as captain had been broken by this side recently in Pakistan.

But if that brought the home crowd to their feet for the first time, they were up again not long after when Hussain, who just having struck Hooper back over his head for four, was out to a grubber from the same bowler that struck him below the boot-laces. It was a ball that will have preyed on all those waiting their turn in the dressing-room.

England A make history, page 27



Stewart Stewart: The England batsman on his way to 83 yesterday Photograph: Allsport

Slips that show the naked truth about Lara's bowling options

HENRY BLOFELD

ON THIS heavily cracked pitch, which is well grassed in places and bare in others, it seemed almost certain it would be the West Indies four fast bowlers who would take them to victory. A week ago, England were looking to their seamers to win the second Test match for them - and we all know what happened then.

Brian Lara started the day with Courtney Walsh and Curtly Ambrose and the West Indies went about their business as if it had been ordained that these two would start England's downfall. It was almost as if they were going through the motions. Not only did they fail to take wickets, however, but the runs began to come rather too freely for Lara's liking.

He found himself facing the age old dilemma. While it was imperative he took wickets, he also had to make sure that too many runs were not given away. It is never easy to get the balance just right. Lara showed that he understood the problem though when, right from the start, he used a third man and a fine leg.

This meant that all he could find for his illustrious pair of opening bowlers was three slips. When after 10 overs Kenny Benjamin took over from Walsh, he was given only one slip when he bowled at Alec Stewart, who had gone for his strokes from the start.

Lara alternated his four fast bowlers but still that elusive first wicket would not fall. He kept them on and looked increasingly surprised as if he were a lion tamer in a circus who suddenly found his charges would not perform for him. He did not know what to do.

When he did not turn to Carl Hooper, whose off-breaks have looked dangerous whenever he has been used in Port of Spain, it was further evidence that he was working to a pre-arranged

plan. When Atherton and Stewart survived the opening assault a more astute captain might at that point have given Hooper a short spell. The batsmen would have been anticipating a constant barrage from the fast bowlers and might have found it difficult to return their thinking.

Hooper has dismissed three good batsmen in this series - Graham Thorpe twice and Stewart - and his captain should have shown greater trust in him now.

When he finally threw the ball to Hooper he had time for only four overs before rain started the lunch interval five



Lara: Good decisions

minutes early and in those overs he caused both batsmen problems and Atherton gave a technical chance to forward short leg when he tried to drive him over midwicket.

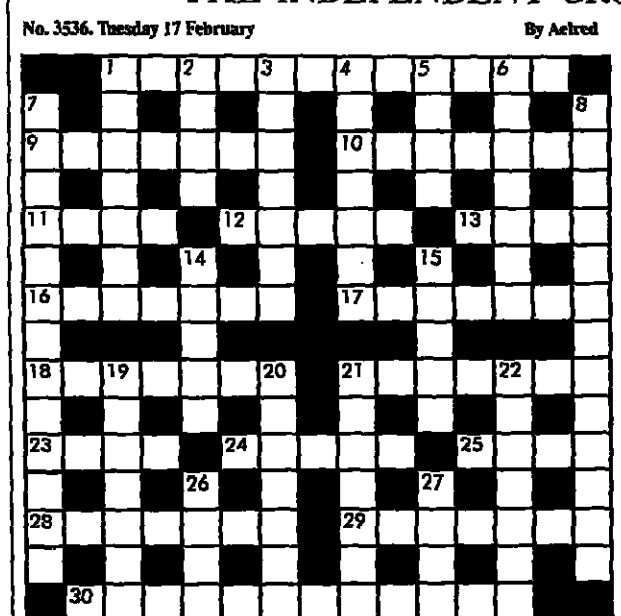
Twenty years ago, Clive Lloyd, the present West Indies team manager, would have begun with Michael Marshall and Michael Holding and then, without thinking, would have brought on Joel Garner and Colin Croft.

On this sort of pitch there would have been no need for anyone else. The present West Indian pace is not in the same class and it calls for more imaginative captaincy to wrinkle sides out.

QUEEN'S PARK OVAL SCOREBOARD

Fourth day: England won 100	M A Butcher not out.....1
WEST INDIES - First innings 159 (A R C Fraser 5-40, A R Coddick 5-67)	Extras (b1 b2 nbt).....18
ENGLAND - First innings 145 (C E Ambrose 5-25)	Total (for 4, 81 overs).....170
WEST INDIES - Second innings 210 (J C Adams 53)	Fall: 1-129 (Atherton); 2-145 (Crawley); 3-162 (Stewart); 4-168 (Hussain)
ENGLAND - Second innings	Bowling (to date): Walsh 25-5-54-2; Ambrose 21-6-36-0; Benjamin 11-3-24-0 (nbt); McLean 4-0-17-0; Adams 6-3-5-0 (nbt); Hooper 14-3-25-1
"M A Atherton c D Williams b Walsh 49 (234 min, 173 balls, 3 fours)"	Progress: Third day: 50-54 min, 214 overs. Best left stopped play at 5:45pm - close 52-0 (Atherton 30, Stewart 14) 25 overs.
A J Stewart c D Williams b Walsh 83 (200 min, 245 balls, 8 fours)"	Fourth day: 100-163 min, 434 overs. Rain stopped play at 11:58pm - lunch taken at 12:24 (Atherton 47, Stewart 64) 53 overs.
J P Crawley run out (Benjamin-D Williams: TV replay) 5 (20 min, 20 balls)"	150-257 min, 685 overs. Test: 170-4 (Thomas 8, Butcher 1) 81 overs.
N Hussain lbw b Hooper 6 (163 min, 27 balls, 1 four)"	Stewart's 50: 183 min, 142 balls, 6 fours.
C P Thorpe not out 9 (25 min, 21 balls, 1 four)"	Umpires: D B Hair and B Nichols.
M A Butcher not out.....1 (16 min, 8 balls)"	TV Replay Umpire: C E Cumberbatch.
	Match Referee: B H Jarman.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD



- ACROSS
- 1 Salt can't be added fancifully at the wrong time (12)
 - 9 Every GI no use for service (7)
 - 10 Dotting worker's sweet (7)
 - 11 Fat, heartless landowner (4)
 - 12 Wife backed vehicle to take on a kilo of seaweed (5)
 - 13 Record day is cold (4)
 - 16 Take too long on delivery round (7)
 - 17 Positive in ceremony, giving witty answer (7)
 - 18 Hard to starve if it's yielded? (7)
 - 21 Pedestrian could find Capri so (7)
 - 23 Notion one advanced is a help generally (4)
 - 24 Try finding 11 more like this one (5)
 - 25 Suggesting company in US should take on a native South American (4)
 - 28 In such teaching you'd have instinctive knowledge (7)
 - 29 It could prevent sound reaching listeners on both sides of piano (7)
 - 30 Academic types securing agreement about a right for long tenure? (7,5)
- DOWN
- 1 Verne's upset after his article is seen to demoralise (7)
 - 2 Horse could go into it (4)
 - 3 A group of players hurried to be fourth? (4-3)
 - 4 Colonel, say, is not skating with king? (7)
 - 5 Sports name adopted by expert (4)
 - 6 They introduce heavy metal in Sweden (4-3)
 - 7 They show good state of NEIS finances? (5,2,6)
 - 8 Maybe cost a thousand, formerly with cash, getting to share place? (5,8)
 - 14 Athenian could be in good odour? (5)
 - 15 Presently controlling power of golf club (5)
 - 19 Pole joins outfit to meet old composer (7)
 - 20 See the sights with desire to return for old contest (7)
 - 21 Children are noisy about nothing when given information (7)
 - 22 Ring America after having to cancel (7)
 - 26 Animal from farm in Kentucky (4)
 - 27 Calais, say, lost head in a bit of opera (4)

Negri's double vision of a bright future with Rangers

Football

By Simon Buckland

MARCO NEGRI says he is still experiencing "flashing" across his damaged eye and has been warned it could stay with him for years to come.

The Rangers striker sustained the injury last month during a squash game with his fellow Italian, Sergio Porrini, and was out of action for more than four weeks. His return to action was delayed by the need for permission to head the ball again because of his impaired vision, and Negri feared for his career.

Having been assured by experts he can continue, the 27-year-old has set his sights on a Scottish League and Cup double. The immediate aim is victory tonight at home to Motherwell to secure a Cup quarter-final place. Negri's relief at playing again is clear and he is determined to carry on regardless with his record of 34 goals since joining last summer from Perugia.

"My eye is getting better," he said. "I keep seeing a flashing across it yet I have been assured this is normal. According to the specialists this is not dangerous and other people with the injury have seen flashing for up to five years afterwards."

"It was a frustrating injury and I was disappointed and I suppose a little bit down when I had to stay at home resting in bed. There I was enjoying a game of squash with Sergio but it proved too dangerous. No more squash for me. That is the last time."

"I was concerned it might be serious and I thought about my career and about Rangers. The club is always the most important thing for me, firstly to win the league and hopefully the Cup. Who scores doesn't matter."

The prospect of Negri finding the scoresheet tonight has been boosted by the return of his main supplier, Brian Laudrup. The Dane was left out by Walter Smith last week after details were made public from Chelsea about Laudrup meeting Gianluca Vialli in midweek.

Smith's main selection problem for tonight is who to play instead of the suspended Porrini, with Craig Moore and Gordon Petric his main options.

Motherwell will again look to their veteran front pairing of Owen Coyle and Tommy Coyne to produce their best, and they are confident of delivering.

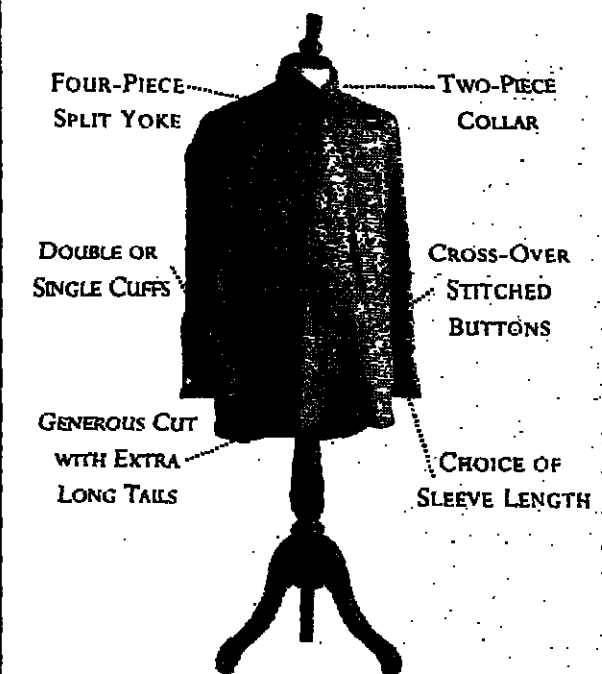
"We seem to get more joy against the Old Firm than most and hopefully we can capitalise on that," Coyle said. "We know it is a difficult tie, but it is a place everyone wants to play. If you can't enjoy it, there is not much point in playing the game."

In tonight's other replay, Dundee take on Ross County at Dens Park with the home manager Jocky Scott saying Dariusz Adamczuk will return to the starting line-up.

"He had been suspended the week before and I wanted to keep a winning team unchanged," Scott said. "But he made a big difference on Saturday, and he will return."

Advocate, the new man at Ibrox, page 27

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